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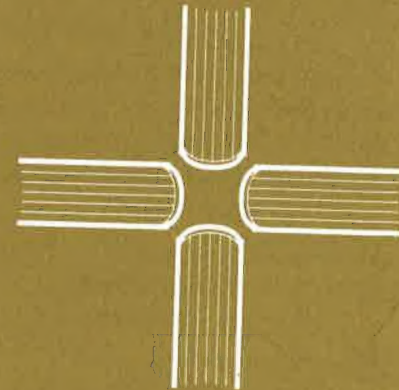


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May/June 1995 Volume 130 Number 5

# LUTHERAN EDUCATION



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# LUTHERAN Education

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Are you savoring the possibilities of a summer break from classroom duties and parish routines? Good! Be re-creative. Your young people, colleagues, children, and congregation members will bless you.

May we suggest that you tuck into your backpack-suitcase-carry-on this issue as a friendly companion? Other exciting adventures will then be as close as your finger tips.

No one who spends even a brief time with the daily newspaper needs to be told that we live in a litigious society. It seems even what once were regarded as innocent acts of affection or confidential exchanges can form the basis of a law suit. *Phil Gersmehl* uses the powerful metaphor of soil analysis (he's a geographer) to represent how a student complaint reached an almost explosive state in his own experience. His struggle in dealing with the problem in ways that would be God-pleasing because they were Scripturally-oriented can inspire, instruct, or caution all of us, depending on need.

Congregational growth is prominent in the headlines of most denominational publications nowadays. It's a controverted issue to say the least. And how does the Lutheran parochial school fit into the picture? *Bob Toepper* has completed a funded study on this topic. Worth pondering.

Since travel may be part of your summer plans, we offer you New Zealand in vicarious form as *Betty Moser* shares her experiences down under with Whole Language strategies used in their schools.

Have you heard of D.E.S.C.A.R? You will have no excuse with this issue in hand to remain ignorant of what may become one of the significant educational trends in Lutheran circles. *Shirley Morgenthaler* does the honors.

*Ken Ebel*, on the other hand, offers his thoughts on the limits of science, a long-time battle ground between religion and the strictly empirical world.

Finally, but not least, we come to another controverted topic: the relation of a liturgical tradition to evangelism. This time we hear from a layman, *Arthur Lyons*, whose background is varied enough to provide a rich context for commentary.

The Usual Suspects (i.e. Departmental writers) are in their usual places to stimulate you.✚

In

This

Issue

Wayne Lucht

## The Golden Years

*M*orella Mensing, that fabled and fabulous teacher of the very young who is now a part of that great "Cloud of Witnesses," once said in her later years, "I have now gone through the Golden Age and entered the Diamond Years...and they're hard!"

Her words came back to me in tandem with the realization that it was just fifty years ago that I was finishing my first year of teaching in a little one-room school in Missouri. We called it "supply" teaching then, a curious term now that we rehearse it, since it was meant to tide over the local congregation at a time of desperate teacher shortage. My class at Concordia had just finished what should have been its freshman year although we had added on two summer sessions as well to satisfy the requirements of our local draft board. Thus it was that, as an eighteen year old, I faced sixteen children in all grades from first through eighth.

Nowadays such a practice would be abhorrent to our certification-obsessed profession. Even then I can recall expressing misgivings to one of our veteran professors whose reassuring words went something like this: "Well, you very probably are not going to do as much damage as you think." My teeth-clenched response was, "Whoopie."

As a matter of fact, he may have been right. Yet, if I met any of the sixteen today, what would their memory be of our time together?

Little Elise, my only second-grader, that bright one, is now in heaven after having suffered through cancer into her early years of marriage. Were there any children? I hadn't heard.

Quentin also may have died. He was one of two eighth graders. His kind heart and patience with this new teacher, separated from him in age by only five years at most, will be a treasured memory forever.

What about Paul, Elise's older brother in sixth grade? A few years ago he was in Chicago for a radiologists' conference and hoped that we could see each other in his downtown hotel. A pleasant evening

followed which contained the amazing news that he was the resident physician who retrieved the fatal bullet from Officer Tippit who was shot by Lee Harvey Oswald. Paul's memory of our time together: "I'll always thank you for letting me read the *Chicago Tribune* every day" (a subscription that assuaged the loneliness of his Chicago-born teacher now living in a town of 800 souls). No comment about any other brilliant teaching methods?

And those five beautiful first graders! Mary Virginia who came to school every morning smelling like a flower, only to leave at 3:30 sooted over by the dust from the imperfect flue-pipe of our coal-burning stove. Or Carl with his twangy drawl and shocking vocabulary inherited from his older brothers, farm boys all. Or Kenny who years later I met as the handsome young butcher in an adjoining town but whose memory shone as the birthday boy with a marvelous hayloft party. Quiet Glenda and mature Francis who learned so well from a struggling pedagogue.

Elmer, Lloyd, Melba, Joyce...how did those names come back after fifty years? Perhaps it's because their impact on me may be very much greater than mine on them.

And that brings us to a long-delayed thank-you. From their suffering at least one stumbling teacher gladly, I find myself representing perhaps many other first-year, second-year, third, and umpteenth-years teachers whose gratitude goes out to those patient, and yes, impatient bodies and souls who were given to our charge for a time.

The focus becomes sharper, despite the increasing years now intervening, when we dwell on the timelessness of the message that called us together. The parents of those sixteen certainly had their eyes on that which is transcendent for them to let their children be under the tutelage of such an inexperienced one.

God gave them grace. God gave me grace.

How else explain meeting the challenge of sharing that faith for the first time in my life on a daily basis? Being a Missouri Synod Lutheran did not particularly equip me for such a task!

Are the fourteen who are left of that group still in the faith?

I do not know. I hope so.

Above all, I pray that my part in their faith journey did not deflect them from the path. Better, is it possible under God's grace that it helped them not to stray? Please God it did.

The daily work of the Lutheran teacher is, in the incomparable words of W.C. Fields, "fraught with marauders," not the least of which is the tension of helping or deflecting younger and fellow pilgrims along the way toward a grace-filled life.

What a gracious God we have who blesses the teaching and proclaiming of His Good News far beyond our capabilities.✚



William C. Rietschel

## Vouchers and Lutheran School Autonomy

The ideal of parental choice in education is not new. Since 1925, when the United States Supreme Court unanimously ruled in *Pierce v. Society of Sisters* that an Oregon statute requiring all children to attend public schools was unconstitutional, parents have had the unchallenged right to educate their children in private or parochial schools. That parents have long had such a right does not mean that many parents have done so. Certainly one reason is that parents cannot afford to pay private or parochial school tuition.

Among current choice advocates are many Lutheran educators who are aggressively promoting a government-financed voucher system that would encompass our Lutheran schools in the interest of expanding parental options and fostering healthy competition, not to mention the prospect of additional revenue. What appears to be often neglected in this Lutheran advocacy are legal implications for Lutheran school autonomy. The concern here is not with whether or not state aid to Lutheran schools via a voucher system violates federal and state constitutional strictures against government assistance to religion. While this may be a very real concern, any Lutheran school eventually participating in a voucher funding system will be faced with threats to institutional autonomy.

Given the state's historic *parens patriae* (as father to all persons, the state has the inherent prerogative to provide for the commonwealth and individual welfare) involvement in the establishment and operation of public schooling and given the fact that a substantial portion of its budget is devoted to education, it is likely that the state will assert strong regulatory authority over participants, including Lutheran participants, in a voucher program to be assured that public interests are served. This is most likely to be apparent when such programs move beyond the experimental stage and substantial amounts of state money are involved.

The more intrusive the regulations, the more likely that at least some aspects of Lutheran school operation may be found to constitute state action under the Fourteenth Amendment. Thus Lutheran schools could

be required to recognize student and teacher Liberty and Property Rights, Due Process, and Equal Protection of the laws.

The best way to limit encroaching regulation is to curtail the legislature's ability to legislate via a constitutional amendment. Voucher proponents have taken this tack in several states. Whether the voters initially or over time allow taxpayer dollars to flow to largely unregulated schools remains to be seen. It seems inevitable, however, that once abuses appear in a largely unregulated system, the demand for accountability will increase.

Educational choice may be a powerful engine for change within schooling. But Lutheran advocacy of a government-financed choice plan should be critically examined in the interest of maintaining the position of the Lutheran school as an alternative to public schooling. It is important for Lutheran educators to comprehend the consequences of participation in voucher programs and not to proceed, as do some Lutheran advocates of educational choice, in the naive hope that Lutheran schools can have it both ways.†



Phil Gersmehl

## *Ecclesiastes: When Servants Curse You*

*D*igging this hole is exhilarating. True, that's a weird adjective for a dirty job. You've seen me working this clamshell digger before, but this is not an ordinary posthole. For one thing, the digging goes fast, because the dirt here in the valley is soft and deep, not at all like the rocky stuff on the hills where I build fence.

The morning fog is lifting. Today will be hot, and I'll be glad to see all the holes dug by noon. Then, after taking pictures, I'll put the dirt back into them. It's the kind of seemingly pointless toil that can make helpers whine: "Why are we doing this?" (Put the emphasis on any of those five words; I've heard them all!) In fact, you might even cite this as a class(ic) example of research, because it makes little sense until you put it in its full context—place, time, and process. Moreover, there's a chance it will all turn out worthless. This particular hole, however, would be worth drilling even if the dirt were hard and the birds weren't singing.

So, you want context? I'm drilling my annual handful of "observation" holes just upstream of the dam we built some years ago.

When combined with the fences and other dams on the farm, this dam is part of a big and rather messy experiment. The goal is to evaluate factors that influence the rates of erosion and sediment deposition. The study will take a long time, because heavy rain is needed to erode this kind of soil, and you never know ahead of time how much rain will fall in a given year.

### NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN

Last year we had a big storm, the kind that comes only once in twenty years. It washed plenty of soil off the steep fields, and I'm trying to figure out how much is trapped behind my dam. This hole is interesting because the soil has distinct layers of different colors. They might help me understand what I saw in some deeper holes I dug in this valley years ago. As the Preacher said in Ecclesiastes,

*Phil Gersmehl, a River Forest alumnus and son of Lutheran teachers, is presently a professor of geography at the University of Minnesota. He does in-service work with teachers throughout the country.*

Is there a thing of which is said,

"See, this is new"?

It has been already,

in the ages before us.

The new hole may show me how to read the old record. A similar pattern of colors occurred in many holes around here. Perhaps they also record big storms. If that is true, then colored layers in sediment give us a way of seeing how often storms really occur. It may be a "striving after wind," but it is the toil I do (Eccl. 9:10). In passages all through the twelve chapters of Ecclesiastes, the Preacher gave us a suitably (I might even say gloriously) ambiguous message about toil, knowledge, and wisdom. He said they're worth seeking, and yet they increase vexation and can never be attained.

That's a message one gets from any intensive study of environmental systems. The world is a messy place, with irregular cycles of hot and cold, wet and dry. These, in turn, have consequences that turn up in many ways. The complex mix of cause and effect in a natural system makes it hard to understand something after only a few years of observation.

So I'm glad we had a big storm early in my study. I mean, over a period of a hundred years, we should get about five storms of the twenty-year size or bigger. Unfortunately, they aren't likely to be neatly spaced every twenty years. In fact, I might have waited thirty or forty years to see the first twenty-year storm. Or I might be lucky and get two of them in the first

fifteen years. Random events, alas, are by definition unevenly spaced.

So, can you see why I'm so intrigued by the holes this year? We had a big storm, and I get to see its effects. As they say, research breakthroughs are what happen when reasonable preparation encounters pure luck. The layers of soil seem to support an intriguing hypothesis: modern tillage techniques and huge tractors have resulted in a substantial reduction in erosion.

Now, I know some popular writers like to castigate big tractors. They call them technology out of control, symptoms of an uncaring society, and a big part of the environmental problem. Those accusations have some intuitive appeal, but they just don't hold up under scrutiny. In the past, horses or small tractors took weeks to plow, disk, and prepare a seed-bed. Bare ground was exposed to the elements for weeks each spring. Nowadays, farmers can prepare and plant a whole field in a single day. That could reduce erosion, and my holes seem to support that idea.

It's exhilarating, but one example won't prove the case. My field is part of a continent-wide research venture, with dozens of people working independently, all trying to measure the erosion that occurs with many different kinds of land use. All of this work is complicated by the same uncertainty, because big storms happen so rarely that we're never sure all other things are really equal in our comparisons. You can't do this kind of research without a

healthy appreciation for the fact that some things just seem to happen; you suspect there's a cause, but it often is hidden in a mass of conflicting pushes and pulls.

That's one big advantage of experience: you've seen things before, and you can start to sort out causes and effects better. Experience can be either personal or collective—reading the observations of other people can also add to your stock of knowledge about causes and effects. In time, the world starts to make more sense. Deep inside, however, a scientist has to remain aware that conditions can change in unnoticed ways, and familiar causes can have new effects.

IN THE MORNING SOW, AND AT EVENING  
... FOR YOU KNOW NOT WHICH WILL  
PROSPER

This is hardly news to a teacher. We all know that times change, and students are different than they were even a few years ago. They grew up in different ways. Today's college seniors don't remember Watergate; high-school students have never known a time without AIDS; and next year's elementary pupils will not recall what it's like to live during a Cold War.

Teachers have to think of new ways to express ideas, so that they are meaningful to new students. Unfortunately, we also know that classes have different personalities from year to year, and those differences help to mask the effects of long-term changes. So we keep trying things, sowing the seed in different ways, and

teaching remains a challenging task, filled with surprises.

Sometimes surprises can be pleasant, like the better attitude toward writing some college sophomores seem to have. Often, however, the surprises are unsettling. Like a twenty-year storm, some things are more or less inevitable if you stay in the classroom long enough. For example, I have a deaf student this term. The person who signs the lectures for her is competent and pleasant, but it is hard for her to watch both a signer and the slides on the screen. I've had to make adjustments, even though other students have their own ideas about the proper place for a lecture.

When you deal with people on the scale of dozens or hundreds every year, you're almost certain to encounter some storms. Even if 99 percent of students seem to fit standard categories, getting an unexpected surprise in a class of 200 is almost a statistical certainty. I hate to say it, but I've almost lost count of all the car accidents, attempted suicides, rapes, parental deaths, serious illnesses, and other catastrophes that have occurred to my students over the years.

The key word is "almost." In fact, I have records of those events, because the legal climate in the United States makes it wise for a teacher to keep track of what happens. It's a part of a new accountability and the point was driven home by events this past spring. If you're willing to walk along to the next hole, we can check the effects of the big storm on the farm while I talk about the big storm on campus.

First, some context. I had four classes this term; the biggest one had 230 students, with four assistants to help students with projects. In the middle of this term, five things happened within two weeks:

*Three assistants came in individually to complain that the fourth (let's call him John) wasn't doing his share of the work. I called a special meeting to discuss it, among ourselves (Matthew 18 applied in a secular university).*

*Five students (none connected with my classes) received threatening notes. Other students reported phone callers who just hung up.*

*Our department chair received a letter from John, complaining that the other assistants and the professor had formed a conspiracy against him.*

*John and another student received some more threatening letters, and someone vandalized their desks.*

*Several people held press conferences and condemned the University for not investigating the case properly. One asserted that "the perpetrator had to be someone within the department." Another said he had clear evidence that the perpetrator was a faculty member and/or one of the female assistants working for him.*

And I was the only professor in the department with more than one female assistant that term.

The story made front-page news—"Hate Crimes on Campus." Protestors marched through our department. Television stations carried the story. Copies of a

newspaper article (stating that the vandalism was done by someone in the department) were circulated at a national meeting. Other departments denounced us for failing to get rid of the perpetrators. And through all this, I kept asking the chair ("take two or three others," says Matthew 18) to arrange a meeting with those who apparently were making accusations, and they kept refusing to meet.

### A TIME TO KEEP SILENT

Don't get tempted to speak when it's time to keep silent

In the first verse of chapter 7, the Preacher said, "a good name is better than precious ointment." The commentary on my desk says that the words for name and ointment, sheem and shemen, make a "memorable paronomasia" in Hebrew (don't use one syllable when six will do!). It's good the verse sticks in mind, because in verse 21 he says, "Do not give heed to all that men say, lest you hear your servant cursing you." As the McCarthy era made so clear, your own words cannot defend against shouted accusations or whispered innuendo. Your only defenses are a good name and other people willing to speak for you. The scary thing is that even those may not be enough in this world. The Preacher used the same metaphor to say:

Dead flies make the perfumer's ointment

give off an evil odor;

so a little folly outweighs

wisdom and honor. (Eccl 10:1)

There are righteous men to whom it happens according to the deeds of the wicked. (Eccl 8:14)

Knowing that a career is at risk makes it even harder to keep silent, and even more important to do so. I'd like to say I was able to turn the other cheek all the time, but in fact I wasn't, and it did make things worse. Do we need all the autobiographical details to find a point in the story? That's a variant of a basic question: how many old memories fade, that time can heal wounds. Like reading a hole in a valley, one should focus on the layers that carry important messages.

But how do we decide which messages are important? This raises a whole bunch of knotty questions. For example, are we sure that suing a minister or teacher for child abuse thirty years after the fact really helps people learn how to deal with the present? On a farm, finding evidence of past erosion may actually tempt some people to avoid making the hard decisions needed to conserve resources today. "This is nothing new," they say, as if present rates of erosion will not cost us in the future.

Likewise, a child-abuse lawsuit may compensate a few victims (and enrich some lawyers!), but it does not necessarily improve a community. If one learns anything from doing research (whether in Ecclesiastes or in a well-placed hole in the ground), it's that the world is a mixture of cause and chance—some things are logical consequences of what went before,

and some things just seem to happen. What matters is how we react to what's happening now, not whether we can identify some past event to blame for every feeling we have today.

That's not to deny one truth: what happened in the past may leave scars that predispose someone to act in particular ways today. On the farm, gullies made by past erosion continue to limit a farmer's options today. Likewise, legacies of a colonial past interact with present conditions to help shape what's happening in places such as Bosnia, Palestine, or Somalia. The difficult part of any research is seeking a balance between trying to understand the influence of the past and trying to assess the forces at work in the present. That search for perspective is especially hard when flood waters are rising, when bullets are flying, or reports of malicious rumors are coming from all over the country.

#### AS A CRACKLING OF THORNS

Amid the confusion on campus, a few things soon became obvious. If it comes down to a public shouting contest about who's-the-villain or who's-the-biggest-victim, and you have studied and sought wisdom, you will lose the contest. No matter what you color or age, you will lose. No matter what your personal facts, you will lose. Your studies have made you aware that the world has some random events in it, and therefore you simply cannot allow yourself to blame so much of what happens on someone else. You're

playing by different rules of evidence, and you can't win a blaming contest.

It's like discussing art or architecture with some magazine reviewers. You're explaining what you like, and why, and they blithely dismiss your opinions as the rantings of an aesthetic illiterate, because they sincerely believe they are the only ones able to define legitimate criteria for evaluation. Since you don't use their criteria, your conclusions can hardly be valid (even if the painting is ugly). Likewise, it is vain (concludes the Preacher—futile) to argue about causes with someone who sees only simple conspiracies. It's better just to present your evidence, live according to the wisdom you learned, and let others draw their own conclusions.

Or, even better, help teach people to draw conclusions based on *all* the evidence. A European denying the persistent impact of colonialism is just as wrong as someone who blames a colonial past for all of the present ills in a country. Excessive certainty on either side becomes a barrier to asking valid questions, let alone finding valid answers.

If this all sounds like a commentary on some recent debates among self-appointed guardians of theological truth, so be it. Luther said, "Unless I am convinced by reason and Scripture, I can do no other." His statement implied that he was capable, even hopeful, of being convinced, given evidence. That stance is far removed from the blind certainty that goes with a simple model of the world, in which a few easily-named causes have some easily-seen ef-

fects. The holes in my valley tell me that erosion has many causes and effects, some more obvious than others. Things such as teaching, explicating Scripture, and responding to unjust attacks are even more complicated.

#### A POOR WISE MAN DELIVERED THE CITY; YET NO ONE REMEMBERED

So we seek wisdom, about erosion and about teaching. I continue to plant hay, fix fences, and decide where cattle graze. Things seem to be better around here—the raw gullies have mostly healed, and grasses wave tall and green in the spring. But desk-bound critics rightly say that my production would be much higher if I grew more corn and had more cows. The old farmer's adage, "Don't eat your seed corn," is really a warning against one simple fact: it's almost always possible to get more now if you ignore the future.

Saving soil by reducing the intensity of use is an easy trade-off to make from a city office, but it can be excruciatingly hard if your children are crying with hunger. Environmental conditions and historic events have combined to give countries such as Bosnia, Palestine, and Somalia more people than the land may be able to sustain with available technology. The scars of past abuse are evident. So are the problems of present use. But the bullets flying through the air make it hard to find a balance between redressing past wrongs and dealing with present problems.

What American students often do not realize is that the horror of guerrilla war is



a step up from what many people in those counties had before, both physically and psychologically. From their perspective, a gun is one way to get food, and a finger on the trigger gives a sense of control.

One big reason to teach history and geography is to provide a broader perspective, so that someone can compare problems and weigh their importance. (Caveat: that sentence is true only if teachers have the skill to push just hard enough to challenge present ways of thinking without turning students off. You and I know how hard it is to find that balance; excessive zeal is just as ineffective as apathy in a teacher.)

**QUIET WORDS [BEFORE A CRISIS] ARE BETTER THAN THE SHOUTING OF FOOLS**  
In this search for perspective, the storm on campus falls somewhere between a Wisconsin gully and a Palestinian massacre. It taught some hard lessons about responding to accusation. These might be worth describing in an educational journal, if for no other reason than because this kind of knowledge is very painful to acquire by firsthand experience. Here are some steps that might help teachers avoid such a fate:

1) Realize that unjust accusations will probably become more rather than less common, if for no other reason than that victims have better access to lawyers and media. In many cases that is a step forward, because a society will be judged on how it treats victims. But it's also a difficult balance: victims deserve redress, and at the same time innocent people can be hurt if the process misfires. We

should therefore try to make the process as humane as possible. When **accusations** are made for the **perspective of another culture**, however, it can challenge some deep beliefs about process. For example, Lutherans believe that the Matthew 18 procedure is beneficial even for a secular society; it confines disputes to a small **group**, where resolution can **perhaps take place without public loss of face**. That, however, does not work if someone from another culture views a request for a private conversation as weakness and publicly cites it as evidence of guilt. (Cultural misunderstanding can **take many forms**: surely it is also a **bizarre perversion of the intent of Matthew 18** for Lutherans to make public demands for someone to declare themselves "willing to be dealt with according to Matthew 18.") In any case, the time to talk about procedures is before you need them.

2) Support colleagues while you seek truth. Abusive teachers should be counseled and perhaps removed. In the interests of children, perhaps a teacher should be suspended during an investigation. But until guilt is proved, colleagues deserve support. (Even after guilt is proved, should we not still support a brother or sister in Christ?) Like a farmer plowing on the contour to increase yield and prevent erosion, we can take steps to prevent both abuse and false accusation. For example, my colleagues and I keep our office doors open during sensitive discussions with students (why should a male university teacher invite being sued for harassment in a legal climate where a closed door

makes it your word against hers?) We also have a tacit agreement—we don't eavesdrop, but after ten minutes of intense discussion a colleague will knock on the door and ask, "Have you forgotten the meeting?" If the discussion seems worthwhile, we can reply, "I'll have to miss it; this is more important." This interruption seldom hurts, because that answer reinforces a perception that we are concerned. If, on the other hand, further discussion with the student isn't helpful right then, the imaginary meeting gives us a face-saving way to suggest waiting a day or two before continuing, hopefully after tempers cool and perspective returns.

3) Keep records of telephone calls, office visits, and notes that might be part of a larger pattern of harassment. This apparently paranoid habit actually helps reduce paranoia because if a pattern emerges you have a record rather than just your stressed memory of what you think might have happened. (I should probably have said "when a pattern emerges," because sooner or later a twenty-year storm is likely to come into any teacher's life, and the record helps maintain perspective.)

4) Monitor your stress level, and don't commit to more than you can do without endangering your ability to respond to twenty-year storms. I know that time management is one of the hardest tasks for any teacher, and especially for those whose "bosses" like to remind them that they have a "divine call" to perform the services

requested. (I'll put it bluntly: invoking a "divine call" in routine discussions of educational policy still strikes me as a blasphemous form of harassment. But I also have to admit that nearly two decades away from IRS "minister" status haven't deprived me of a tendency to lapse into preachiness near the end of a lecture or article! So, let's just leave that sentence tucked inside its parentheses and walk on to the last hole. The fact that I'm already two pages over my limit suggests that I haven't solved the time management problem, either!)

Resolving disputes about the use of time is a difficult problem. That's what brought the three assistants into my office, and it's also why I build fences and gather stones on my farm. Learning how to manage time is part of finding meaning in our toil. If you're still reading this, we definitely have enough ideas in common to be supportive colleagues, even if we differ about details. May the next storm in your life be one you want to see, for whatever work you are doing. If it's not, then may God grant you wisdom to let your good name and your supportive colleagues speak for you. Matthew 18 will not let you participate in a public innuendo contest with accusers who seek someone to blame for whatever they choose to call a result of past victimization. You can't even enter, let alone win, that kind of blaming duel. You can, however, be part of an educational system that tries to reduce the victimization that is happening right now. There is "a time to keep silence, and a time



to speak," and there is a supportive army of fellow teachers who feel called to help students learn how to see the difference. Good stewardship of your call is the best way to build a good name.

Finally, there is the strangely reassuring fact that we learn from storms as well as quiet days. Maybe that's what is meant by the "peace that passes understanding." Look, there. See that tan layer about two inches down? That's the record of last year's storm, I bet. Seeing the past in a posthole is vanity, a striving after wind, unless we learn wisdom from it. Then

(says the Preacher) it's a gift of meaningful toil. I believe.†

#### REFERENCES

1. 1982 Ecclesiastes and the Call to Build Fence, *Lutheran Education* 118:121-129.
2. 1985 Ecclesiastes in a Time to Gather Stones Together, *Lutheran Education* 121:4-12.
3. If the question in these parentheses isn't knotty enough, how about this: no one says much if a male professor travels with a male student to a faraway meeting, but merely suggesting a long drive and hotel stay to a female student is grounds for a lawsuit. This raises a messy question that could be a basis for future lawsuits: does this form of gender discrimination fail to provide equal access to faculty expertise?

### *Donated supplies program seeks more schools*

Following a record \$95 million donations year, a nationwide gifts-in-kind program is seeking more schools and nonprofits to receive these goods. Available materials include office supplies, computer software and accessories, janitorial items, arts and crafts, audio and video tapes, building supplies, paper products, tools, and hardware. These new products are collected by a nonprofit called NAEIR, the National Association for the Exchange of Industrial Resources, based in Galesburg, Illinois. Recipient organizations pay \$645 annual dues, plus shipping and handling, but the merchandise itself is free. NAEIR says members receive an average of \$7,000 worth of materials a year, selecting what they need from 300-page catalogs issued every ten weeks. A computer ensures fair distribution, and a moneyback guarantee protects all first-year members. Since this program was started in 1977, it has collected and passed on \$500 million worth of new, donated supplies. For a free information kit and application, phone toll-free: 800-562-0955 or fax a request on official letterhead to 309-343-0862.



Robert M. Toepper

## *Christian Education and Congregational Growth*



The goal of this study was to compare parishes in the 15 largest districts of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod which sponsor free-standing preschools, elementary schools (with or without a feeder pre-school), or no parochial school, with five categories of parish growth statistics: baptized membership, enrollment, and Vacation Bible School enrollment. The questions to be answered are: Do parishes which sponsor parochial preschools and/or elementary schools encourage growth in the other five categories? Do parishes which sponsor no parochial school encourage growth in the other five categories?

The answer to the first question asks whether the sponsorship of full-time parochial educational agencies facilitates the growth of the sponsoring congregation's membership and/or parish education agencies. The second question probes the contention of the "church growth movement" that parish education programs, rather than the sponsorship of parochial school endeavors, lead to growth in church membership.

This study originally was a response by the Center for Social Research in the Church at Concordia University to a "Request for Proposals for Studies Conducted under the Church Membership Initiative Project" funded and supervised by the Aid Association for Lutherans, Appleton, Wisconsin.

#### A. THE DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Essentially, the study consisted of dividing the 15 districts under study into parishes which do not sponsor parochial schools and parishes which sponsor parochial schools. The parishes with schools category was then further subdivided into congregations with

- (new) elementary schools that began their operations during the decade of the 1980s,
- established elementary schools throughout the decade,
- elementary schools that closed during the decade,
- (new) preschools that began their operations during the decade,

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established preschools throughout the decade, and preschools that closed during the decade.

For purposes of this study, elementary schools encompass grades K or 1 upward through the grades. A pre-school may be attached to an elementary school. A pre-school is a free-standing early childhood center encompassing any combination of educational operations prior to grade 1.

A category labeled "other schools" had to be developed in order to "group" a set of congregations and/or schools where the data were insufficient to permit statistical analysis over the three data-points of the decade. The primary components of this category are congregations and/or schools that did not report in at least one of the three years, schools that changed school type during the period (this especially includes school consolidations because it is not possible to accurately attribute changes to the sponsoring congregations), and, unfortunately, new parishes that were developed during the period (because the initial zeroes confound statistical analysis).

Data on congregational baptized membership, communicant membership, adult confirmations, Sunday School enrollment, and Vacation Bible School enrollment were then manipulated to determine a per cent of change figure for each category for each type of school sponsorship (including no school) for the years 1980-85, 1985-90, and 1980-90.

Data collected by the LCMS for inclusion in the *Statistical Yearbook* were used to define the size of each Missouri Synod congregation, the character of gains by each congregation from outside the Synod, the character of the congregation's parish edu-

cation ministry, and the type and size (no school, free-standing early childhood operation, or grade school) of the congregation's parochial school. The years 1980, 1985, and 1990 were selected in order to provide three data points on each congregation for the "decade" of the 1980s. Although eleven years are involved, this study refers to the period as a "decade". Parochial school data for 1990, unavailable from the LCMS, utilized 1990-91 school locations, types, and enrollments as provided by each district selected for inclusion in the study.

The data collected by the Board of Parish Services (BPS) of the LCMS for inclusion in the various school reports of the Board originally were intended to be used to define the size of the free-standing pre-school and elementary school enrollments of the LCMS. A rich array of additional data of interest to this study are collected annually by the BPS. However, it was eventually discovered that the 1980 school data were unavailable, the 1985 data are not, at present, computer readable, and the 1990 school data that are available are incomplete. Therefore, LCMS *Statistical Yearbook* data supplemented with 1990 school data solicited directly from the selected districts were used as the database for this study.

In order to select the LCMS districts that would be included in the study, the 35 districts were ranked for 1980, 1985, and 1990 as to baptized membership, parochial school enrollment, number of parochial school children of parents determined to be unchurched, Sunday School enrollment, and children of nonmembers enrolled in Vacation Bible School. (Based on data from the *Statistical Yearbook* (SY), 1980, pp. 195, 197, 230, and 232, SY, 1985, pp. 197, 199,

230, and 232; and SY, 1990, pp. 197, 198, 232, and 234.)

In each of the five rankings, the median individual (the fiftieth percentile) fell no lower than within the tenth-ranked district. Therefore, the ten top-ranked districts in each category were selected for inclusion in the study. The rankings are listed below in Figure 1. Selection ties were broken by choosing the district with the highest recent rankings.

Although 50 possibilities existed, only 15 districts (two and one-half districts less than half of the 35 LCMS districts) met the

criteria for inclusion in the study. (In Figure 1, rankings 11 through 15 as well as the rankings of districts already included in other categories of the sample are also included for comparative purposes.) The totals for the top 15 districts in each sample represent between 62.8 and 77.6 per cent of the Missouri Synod universe. Note that the east and west coasts are well-represented, especially in the two samples depicting unchurched enrollments. The heavily-schooled districts are Michigan, Pacific Southwest, Northern Illinois, Texas, and Missouri.

Figure 1. LCMS DISTRICT RANKINGS IN FIVE CATEGORIES  
(FOR YEARS 1980-1985-1990)

BAPTIZED		SCHL. ENRL.		SCHL. UNCH.		SS. ENRL		VBS UNCH.	
MI	1-1-1	MI	1-1-1	PSW	1-1-1	MI	1-1-1	MI	1-1-1
NID	2-2-2	PSW	3-2-2	FLGA	2-3-2	MNS	3-2-2	FLGA	10-18-2
MNS	3-3-3	NID	2-3-3	MI	3-4-3	NID	2-3-3	TX	3-3-3
MO	5-5-4	TX	5-4-4	CNH	4-2-4	TX	6-4-4	PSW	2-4-4
SWS	4-4-5	MO	4-5-5	TX	6-5-5	MO	4-5-5	NW	4-6-5
TX	6-6-6	IN	7-6-6	NW	8-7-6	NEB	7-6-6	MO	5-8-6
IN	7-7-7	SWS	6-7-7	NID	5-6-7	SWS	5-7-7	NID	6-7-7
NWS	8-9-8	FLGA	8-8-8	RM	13-11-8	NWS	8-8-8	EA	7-10-8
NEB	9-8-9	MNS	9-9-9	MO	7-9-9	IN	9-9-9	RM	15-5-9
PSW	10-10-10	CNH	11-10-10	IN	15-12-10	PSW	11-10-10	CNH	8-9-10
NW	11-11-11	OH	12-12-11	ATL	9-8-11	NW	10-11-11	IN	9-11-11
CID	12-12-12	NEB	14-13-12	SE	11-10-12	IAW	12-13-12	MNS	14-2-12
SE	17-16-13	NW	17-15-13	OH	14-14-13	MNN	13-12-13	SE	13-13-13
OH	16-15-14	RM	19-21-14	ENG	12-13-14	CID	14-14-14	NEB	20-14-14
IAW	15-14-15	ATL	13-14-15	EA	19-15-15	OH	15-15-15	OH	11-12-15
FLGA	20-19-17	NWS	21-17-18	SWS	16-17-18	RM	21-17-17	SWS	12-15-16
EA	18-18-20	EA	22-18-19	NEB	21-22-19	CNH	19-19-19	NWS	21-24-23
CNH	19-20-21			MNS	18-18-20	FLGA	23-23-20		
RM	21-22-22			NWS	29-26-23	EA	20-22-22		

# B. BASIC SETTING

The decade of the 1980s found the LCMS in the United States increasing by 412 preaching stations, or congregations, (a 7.2 per cent gain), but declining about 1.0 per cent in baptized and communicant membership. Junior confirmations within the LCMS declined 24.7 per cent and adults confirmed or baptized declined 11.9 per cent. Total gains from without fell 8.5 per cent during the decade. During the 1980s, Sunday School enrollments increased 6.0 per cent and Vacation Bible School enrollments increased 12.1 per cent. The LCMS increased by 169 parochial elementary schools during the decade, a gain of 12.1 per cent. The number of pupils in the parochial elementary school system rose 11.5 per cent during the decade. (Based on data from the SY, 1980, pp. 195-197 and 230; 1985, pp. 197-199 and 230; and 1990, pp. 196-198 and 232.)

The 15 largest districts of the LCMS under study are described above. These fifteen districts represent 65 per cent of the Synod's baptized membership; about 75 per cent of its parochial school enrollment; about 75 per cent of the unchurched students in its parochial schools; just under 65 per cent of its Sunday School enrollment; and 65 per cent of its unchurched VBS enrollment.

In the sample generated for this study, during the decade of the 1980s the 2,985 congregations of these 15 largest districts experienced a two per cent *decline* in baptized membership (a one per cent greater decline than the Synod reported), a three per cent decline in communicant membership (a two per cent greater decline than the Synod reported), a 14 per cent *decline* in adult confirmations (probably greater than the Synod in general), a four per cent *decline* in

Sunday School enrollment (where the Synod reported a six per cent increase), an 18 per cent *increase* in Vacation Bible School enrollment (where the Synod reported a twelve per cent increase), and a 10.8 per cent *increase* in parochial school enrollment where the Synod reported an eleven per cent increase).

The average size of the 566 established elementary schools of these fifteen largest districts grew from 159 to 172 pupils and the average size of the 154 established pre-schools grew from 48 to 66 pupils during the decade. The 40 new elementary schools were averaging 99 pupils by 1990 and the 243 new preschools were averaging 46 pupils by 1990. Two hundred and twenty-five (225) congregations closed their elementary schools and 44 congregations closed their free-standing preschools during the decade.

# C. SPECIFIC FINDINGS

For purposes of this study, the 2,985 congregations of the 15 districts were categorized into

- 1,713 congregations with no school,
- 566 congregations with established elementary schools,
- 243 congregations with new free-standing preschools that were developed during the decade,
- 225 congregations with elementary schools that closed during the decade,
- 154 congregations with established preschools,
- 44 congregations with preschools that closed during the decade, and

40 congregations with new elementary schools that were developed during the decade.

(The data on 660 congregations were not used due to gaps in recording or changes in the designations of school type.)

The study compared baptized and communicant membership as well as various parish education statistics (day school enrollment, Sunday School enrollment, and Vacation Bible School enrollment) as the dependent variables and the type of parochial school (as described above) as the independent variable. The following figures depict the per cent changes in baptized membership, communicant or confirmed membership, adult confirmations, Sunday School enrollment, and Vacation Bible School enrollment for eight categories of parishes in the 15 largest districts for the periods 1980 to 1985, 1985 to 1990, and 1980 to 1990. The data are presented in the order of the per cent change for the decade 1980 to 1990.

Congregations with new and established pre-school endeavors led the 15 largest districts of the LCMS in baptized membership growth during the decade. Congregations

with no school approximated the 15 districts as a whole with a two per cent decline in baptized membership. Congregations with established and new elementary schools experienced slightly greater declines than the 15 districts as a whole during the decade. Congregations that closed their schools, as would be expected, experienced the greatest declines in baptized membership during the decade.

Congregations with new and established preschools experienced growth in communicant membership during the decade. Congregations with no school experienced slightly fewer losses in communicant membership than the 15 largest districts as a whole. Congregations with established and new elementary schools experienced slightly less communicant membership growth than the 15 districts as a whole. Congregations that closed their schools experienced the greatest declines in communicant membership during the decade. (Comparison of Figures 3 and 4, as probably would be expected, indicates very little difference between baptized and communicant membership trends

Figure 2. Per cent Change in BAPTIZED MEMBERSHIP

N	Congregations with:	% chg 80-85	% chg 85-90	% chg 80-90
243	New Pre-Schools	7	2	9
154	Established Pre-Schools	4	2	5
1713	No School	1	-3	-2
(2985)	Districts' Congregations	0	-2	-2)
566	Established Elem. Schools	-1	-2	-3
40	New Elementary Schools	-1	-3	-3
44	Pre-Schools that Closed	6	-5	-11
225	Elem Schools that Closed	-8	-8	-16



for the 15 largest districts during the decade.)

Congregations with established preschools led the 15 largest districts with the only gains in adult confirmations during the decade. Congregations with new elementary schools and new preschools experienced less decline in adult confirmations than the 15 largest districts as a whole. Congregations with established elementary schools and with preschools that closed paralleled the 15 districts' decline of 14 percent in adult confirmations. Congregations with no school and, to a greater degree, congregations that closed their elementary schools experienced the greatest declines in adult confirmations.

Congregations with new preschools and elementary schools experienced growth in Sunday School enrollment during the decade.

Congregations with established elementary schools and preschools experienced zero growth compared to a loss of four percent in Sunday School enrollment by the 15 districts as a whole. Congregations with no school experienced losses in Sunday School enrollment during the decade. Congregations that closed their schools experienced the greatest declines in Sunday School enrollment during the decade.

The 15 largest districts recorded the greatest levels of growth in Vacation Bible School enrollment during the decade of the 1980s. Congregations with new preschools experienced the greatest increases in Vacation Bible School enrollment during the decade, followed by congregations with new and established elementary schools. Congregations with no school experienced slightly less VBS growth than the 15 largest

Figure 3. Per cent Change in COMMUNICANT MEMBERSHIP

N	Congregations with:	% chg 80-85	% chg 85-90	%chg 80-90
243	New Pre-Schools	6	3	9
154	Established Pre-Schools	4	2	6
1713	No School	1	-2	-1
(2985	Districts' Congregations	0	-2	-3)
566	Established Elem. Schools	-1	-3	-4
40	New Elementary Schools	0	-5	-5
44	Pre-Schools that Closed	-5	-5	-9
225	Elem Schools that Closed	-7	-9	-15

Figure 4. Per cent Change in ADULT CONFIRMANTS

N	Congregations with:	% chg 80-85	% chg 85-90	%chg 80-90
243	New Pre-Schools	-3	1	-3
154	Established Pre-Schools	-3	6	3
1713	No School	-9	-11	-19
(2985	Districts' Congregations	-8	-7	-14)
566	Established Elem. Schools	-6	-7	-12
40	New Elementary Schools	-4	4	-1
44	Pre-Schools that Closed	-6	-8	-14
225	Elem Schools that Closed	-21	-20	-37

Figure 5. Per cent Change in SUNDAY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

N	Congregations with:	% chg 80-85	% chg 85-90	%chg 80-90
243	New Pre-Schools	-1	7	6
154	Established Pre-Schools	-6	6	0
1713	No School	-4	-3	-7
(2985	Districts' Congregations	-5	1	-4)
566	Established Elem. Schools	-4	4	0
40	New Elementary Schools	0	2	2
44	Pre-Schools that Closed	-11	-1	-12
225	Elem Schools that Closed	-14	-9	-22

Figure 6. Per cent Change in VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

N	Congregations with:	% chg 80-85	% chg 85-90	%chg 80-90
243	New Pre-Schools	15	9	26
154	Established Pre-Schools	-6	8	1
1713	No School	16	-8	7
(2985	Districts' Congregations	10	-2	8)
566	Established Elem. Schools	6	3	9
40	New Elementary Schools	10	4	14
44	Pre-Schools that Closed	-17	-17	-31
225	Elem Schools that Closed	10	-9	0

districts as a whole. Congregations with established preschools experienced slight VBS enrollment growth. Congregations that closed their elementary school experienced zero growth in VBS enrollment. Congregations that closed their preschools experienced the greatest declines in VBS enrollment during the decade.

#### D. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The 243 congregations that developed new preschools during the decade led the 15 largest districts of the Missouri Synod with positive growth in all five growth categories under study except adult confirmations where they experienced a slight decline. The 40 congregations that developed new elementary schools during the decade did well in Vacation Bible School and Sunday School enrollment growth, declined only one percent in adult confirmations, but experienced

slightly more losses in communicant and baptized membership than the 15 largest districts as a whole. Thus, developing a new parochial school endeavor, especially a new pre-school, appears to be associated with leadership in the five growth categories under study.

The 154 congregations that sponsored established preschools experienced growth in communicant and baptized membership, led the 15 districts with the only positive increase in adult confirmations, but experienced very little growth in VBS and Sunday School enrollments.

The 566 congregations with established elementary schools, which represent approximately 19 per cent of the congregations in the sample, approximated the districts as a whole with slight baptized and communicant membership and adult confirmation losses. They did slightly better than the 15

districts as a whole in VBS enrollment gains, but they experienced zero growth in Sunday School enrollment.

The 1,713 congregations with no school, which represent slightly more than 57 per cent of the 2,985 congregations in the sample, approximated the congregations of the 15 districts as a whole with a slight loss in baptized membership, a lesser loss in communicant membership than the congregations of the 15 districts as a whole, experienced substantial losses in adult confirmations, declined more in Sunday School enrollment than the congregations of the 15 districts as a whole, and increased similarly to the 15 districts as a whole in VBS enrollment. Thus, congregations without schools do not have exemplary growth statistics. This questions the "church growth movement" contention that parish education programs rather than parochial school endeavors lead to congregational growth.

As might be expected, but not always borne out by individual district statistics, congregations that closed their schools, especially their elementary schools, experienced the least gains in the five growth categories under study. However, in the 15 largest districts of the LCMS, the 44 congregations that closed their preschools during the decade approximated the districts as a whole in decline in adult confirmations.

Thus it appears that congregations that open or continue established preschools are where the growth action is in the contemporary LCMS. Congregations with new and established elementary schools as well as with no school fluctuate about the district averages. And congregations that close their schools, especially their elementary schools,

appear to be experiencing troubles in the other areas of their ministries as well.

The general pattern identified in the analysis of all 15 of the largest districts of the LCMS continues in the baptized membership and Sunday School enrollment sample as well as in the parochial school enrollment sample (see Figure 1), which comprise the ten largest districts of the LCMS in those categories. In general, congregations with established and new preschools tended to lead the congregations of the samples with positive gains in each of the five growth categories under study for the decade of the 1980s. Congregations with no school hovered slightly under and, sometimes slightly above the averages for the districts involved. Congregations with established and new elementary schools tend to hover a bit more under the districts' averages, except that congregations with new elementary schools did well in growth in adult confirmations. Congregations that closed their preschools during the decade tended to experience declines in all five growth categories. Congregations that closed their elementary schools experienced the greatest declines during the decade in all five categories.

The general pattern discovered in the analysis of the previous categories continues in the analysis of the unchurched parochial school and Vacation Bible School enrollment samples (see Figure 1), but with slight variations. In general, congregations with new preschools still tended to lead the districts involved, but not as comprehensively. And the leadership of congregations with established preschools is more forceful, especially in adult confirmations where these congregations displaced the leadership of the congregations with new pre-

schools. In addition, congregations with new elementary schools made a strong showing in gains in Sunday School and, especially, VBS enrollments.

In these samples, congregations with no school experienced fewer losses in baptized and communicant membership, greater declines in adult confirmations and Sunday School enrollment, but greater gains in Vacation Bible School enrollment than the districts in general. Again, this questions the "church growth movement" contention that parish education programs rather than parochial school endeavors lead to congregational growth. It was in these two samples that this contention had the greatest possibility of being demonstrated. But it appears that at least, in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, congregations with no schools tend to approximate the growth patterns of the average congregation and, during the decade of the 1980s, it was only in VBS enrollment that there was any positive average growth. In no instances, are the congregations without a school in anything close to a leadership capacity in the five growth categories of this study.

Congregations with established and new elementary schools in the unchurched school and Vacation Bible School samples hovered about the districts' averages. The 33 congregations with new elementary schools, however, exerted some leadership with Sunday School and Vacation Bible School enrollment gains. As would be expected, congregations that closed their schools, especially their elementary schools, tended to experience the greatest declines in all five growth categories under study. However, congregations that closed their preschools were

able to experience fewer adult confirmation losses than the districts in general in these two samples.

In summary, then the most vibrant field of growth in the five categories under study in the LCMS was Vacation Bible School enrollment. In addition, in recent times, it appears that congregations that establish, develop, and sometimes even close free-standing preschools are where the growth-action is in the LCMS.

Missouri Synod congregations that sponsor parochial elementary schools, which comprise 20 per cent of the congregations in the study, are not vibrant examples of growth in these five categories. Thus, the data appears to indicate that congregations that sponsor or establish parochial elementary schools tend to lag behind the averages in all five categories chosen for emphasis in this study. Thus, at the present time in the history of the LCMS, it does not appear that parochial elementary schools represent where the growth-action is within the Synod.

However, congregations without schools, which represent 57 per cent of the congregations in the study, do not have exemplary growth statistics either. Thus, the contention of the "church growth movement" that parish education programs, rather than parochial school endeavors, lead to growth is not borne out.

Finally, congregations that close, not only their elementary schools, but also their preschools, generally have the weakest growth in these five categories. Therefore, congregations that close their schools appear to be experiencing troubles in the other areas of their ministries as well. †

Betty Moser

## Whole Language In New Zealand



Recently my husband, Carl, and I had the opportunity to take a personal study tour of the schools in New Zealand. The purpose of our two week tour was to observe the "whole language" philosophy and approach to learning and teaching language and reading as it is used in the New Zealand schools.

We traveled through both the North Island and the South Island of New Zealand, visiting 11 public schools which varied in size, style, cultural make-up and financial status of the families and the community. Although there are private and parochial schools in New Zealand, there are no Lutheran schools.

### PHILOSOPHY AND PROCESS FOR LEARNING LANGUAGE/READING

The term "Whole Language" is an American term, given to us by Ken and Yetta Goodman from the University of Arizona in Tucson, Arizona. Although New Zealand teachers are familiar with the term "whole language", they prefer to think about the process as a philosophy of wholistic learning, where the three strands of English (oral language, written language and visual language) work independently, where students are daily involved in the reading and writing processes, where mistakes are accepted as part of the learning process, where cooperative learning is encouraged and where progress is measured against one's own continued growth and achievement. However, for the purposes of this paper I will refer to the process as whole language.

The whole language philosophy and process of teaching language and reading was first introduced into the New Zealand curriculum 10 years ago. At the time the Goodman's of the United States were observing and studying the backgrounds, processes and approaches that early readers used in becoming successful readers, Marie Clay was doing the same in New Zealand. Through her observations and interviews with children and parents, Marie Clay identified similar characteristics and approaches that many of the successful early readers engaged in as they grew in their abilities to become successful readers. This led to Marie Clay's development of a philosophy of how children learn and to a process and approach that

could be used by parents and teachers as they help children learn about language and reading. This philosophy and process were eventually accepted by New Zealand's Ministry of Education, and because New Zealand has a national curriculum, all the teachers, professors, administrators and other supportive staff people attended classes, workshops and on-site seminars to learn how to use the whole language philosophy and process in guiding children as they learn about language and reading. The "new" philosophy and process was widely accepted, and today, 10 years later, the teachers still proclaim its strengths and benefits. As one teacher said, "We would never go back to the old way of teaching reading!"

### OBSERVING WHOLE LANGUAGE IN NEW ZEALAND SCHOOLS

There are many similarities between the philosophies and processes of whole language as it is used in the United States and whole language as it is used in New Zealand. However, there are also some distinct differences, which may or may not be related directly to the schools we have visited in both countries.

In New Zealand, the Ministry of Education provides published readers for all levels. These are little booklets, each one with a completely different story, written by authors hired by the Ministry of Education. There is a large supply of these readers for each level. The stories appear to be similar to those found in our basal readers in the United States. In addition, New

Zealand teachers use trade books, poetry books, magazines and other reading materials for the teaching of reading. All of these readers, books, magazines and materials are kept in a central location, and from this array of reading materials the teacher and the children select the specific reading material for each child.

Each child has his own "reader" box in which to store his selected reading materials. Following the introduction of a group lesson, the teacher will work with individual or small groups of children with materials from their "reader" boxes. These materials may also be sent home to share with their families or as homework. While the teacher is working with individual children or small groups of children, the other children are reading on their own or working on an assigned skill lesson or writing project. Children are busy interacting and working together. The environment is relaxed, but busy. Children are everywhere and don't appear to have an assigned place to work. Children that get off target are quickly brought back to the work at hand. Sometimes these children may be assigned a seat nearby the teacher.

Children needing extra assistance with reading are enrolled in the Reading Recovery program or they work with teacher aides or parents.

Teachers in New Zealand use Big Books, poems and other charts to teach reading strategies and skills. They follow the procedures of introducing Big Books that are customarily used in our schools in

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the United States. Listening and speaking are emphasized as the children retell stories using puppets, dramatization or other story telling props. Through thoughtful questioning techniques and an environment of acceptance, teachers encourage the children to express their own ideas and feelings and to be tolerant of the ideas and feelings of others. Children are also encouraged to respond to stories through their writing activities.

Children in New Zealand get a lot of practice in the process of writing. Although each school may be different, we saw several examples of children at different ability levels writing on the same topic. In most of the schools, the children had draft books where they wrote their first copy of a writing assignment. These books were made by taking several sheets of paper, folding them in half, stapling them together and adding a cover. Similar books were made for math, science, social studies, daily news, spellers, and a Writer's Book. We did not see published workbooks in use, although some of the teachers did use worksheets.

The children, beginning with the 5 year olds, are taught to use the steps in the writing process: choosing a topic, composing, drafting, correcting and publishing. As they write, the children circle words that they need to check for spelling, first in their speller book and then with a friend or teacher. During conferencing time with the teacher, which is usually just a few minutes as the teacher walks around the room, the teacher may point out other

words that need to be checked for spelling, ask a leading question that may stimulate further thought for more writing or help with a strategy or skill that the child may need assistance with.

The teacher does not use red pencils on the child's paper. Papers are checked for what is done correctly and suggestions, corrections or further assignments are written in black pencil. After all corrections are done on the draft copy, the child is ready to rewrite the corrected version in published form, which may be a copy for their personal Writer's Book, a published book, complete with illustrations, a chart or some other creative idea suggested by the child or the teacher. Each writing assignment may take several days or a week. Children may or may not be writing on the same topic, depending on their choice or the teacher's assignment. At times the teacher may assign a topic to a particular child or a class, such as poetry, describing or explaining a science experiment, writing an invitation or practicing a particular skill.

Art plays an important role in both the reading and writing activities in the New Zealand classrooms. Art work, usually huge in size, is displayed everywhere, from the floor to the ceiling, from the classroom to the hall, library, office and even outside. Most of the art work is in response to a story or a poem or as an illustration for a writing assignment. Paintings, clay sculptures, weavings, etc. are labeled in large print with words, names, sentences and stories. New Zealand schools

are alive with the displayed art work and writings of the children! Only once did I see "dittoed" art on display. Art supplies and materials are always available and the children are encouraged to express themselves creatively.

## ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION AND REPORTING

There is no national assessment tool used in New Zealand. Each school had its own system of evaluating and reporting the progress of the children. Most schools rely heavily on the teacher's observations and informal checklists. They also use the "running record" technique of determining a child's level of reading and some of the schools use standardized testing.

Report cards are used and, again, each school prepares its own card, most of them recording with a type of Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory system. Parent/Teacher conferences are held 2 or 3 times a year and most of the teachers feel this is the most beneficial way of sharing a child's work, reporting to parents and enlisting their support.

## CONCLUSION

After 10 years, whole language, or wholistic learning, is still alive in New Zealand—and still maturing and changing! The new English Curriculum, published in 1993 by New Zealand's Ministry of Education, reaffirms the following general aims for the teaching of language and reading at all levels.

Students should be able to:

- engage with and enjoy language in all its varieties;
- understand, respond to, and use oral, written, and visual language effectively in a range of contexts. (p.9)†

## REFERENCES

- Education for the 21st Century: A Discussion Document, New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1993.
- English Curriculum Draft, New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1993.
- Observations and interviews with students, teachers and administrators, New Zealand Public Schools.

Shirley K. Morgenthaler

## The D•E•S•C•A•R Story

### BEGINNINGS

Five years ago, two friends—one a seminary professor, the other a pediatric neurologist—spent vacation hours discussing the needs of young children and their families in today's society. The concern for children's spiritual development was uppermost in their minds. This discussion led to a resolution to do something tangible about their concerns.

Creative funding and determination helped make this resolution a reality in 1991 by bringing together church leaders and early childhood professionals, first in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Soon after that, a joint meeting was arranged between representatives of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) and ELCA. The two friends, Luther Lindberg and Stan Graven, discovered, even at these initial meetings, that others shared their concerns and their passion.

The concern of the group was focused on children ages birth to three. The attention was specifically directed towards young children at risk. Everyone in the group shared a passion for the spiritual development of young children, and quickly agreed that children at risk were also at risk of impaired spiritual development.

A request for funding to Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL) from this joint, self-appointed committee through the CPPC (Cooperative Parish Projects Committee) of the ELCA and LCMS resulted in a grant to study the issues and begin to develop strategies to address those issues. The function of the CPPC is to evaluate proposals for joint church-body projects and to submit them to funders such as AAL on behalf of both church bodies. In this case, AAL was a natural choice because it had already expressed interest in such a project through the CPPC.

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### THE D•E•S•C•A•R PROJECT

Over the next three years, groups of differing sizes were convened. These groups included the Steering Committee, a small group selected to direct the work of the project, and numerous Dialogue Groups across the United States.

The Dialogue Groups consisted of lay and professional leaders in a variety of communities and metropolitan areas. These groups were given information about children's development and spiritual nurture, including the issues unique to young children at risk. Dialogue Groups were asked to identify local issues and to list existing projects designed to address those issues.

The information gathered from the various Dialogue Groups was then used as background for a national gathering. At this meeting, the task was to begin to develop strategies to meet the issues and concerns which had emerged and to suggest ways to implement those strategies.

One of the interesting concepts to emerge from the national meeting was that congregations are at different readiness levels concerning ministry to young children. Type A congregations are those congregations that do not yet regard the needs of young children as important to their mission and ministry. These congregations are not particularly intentional in developing programs which meet the needs of very young children and their families.

Type B congregations are those congregations which identify the needs of young children as important for their mis-

sion and ministry. In these congregations the focus of the concern for children is inward, directed toward the families in their membership.

Type C congregations are those congregations which see the concerns of the young children of the community as important concerns for their mission and ministry. These congregations are more likely to develop programs that serve the community such as child care, family support programs of various kinds, and other outreach programs directed specifically at very young children and their families.

### MISSION

"D•E•S•C•A•R (Dedicated Early Support to Children at Risk) is a cooperative project that links early childhood professionals, church leaders, concerned individuals, and health professionals across congregations and communities in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. The group is committed to work together in making a difference for young children, especially those at risk. The project has been made possible through a grant from AAL."

By the time of the national gathering, the Steering Committee had developed a mission statement (above) and had named the project D•E•S•C•A•R (pronounced dee'-scar). The results of the national gathering indicated that the passion of the Steering committee was shared by many others, and that this concern for young children needed to be shared with local congregations across both church bodies.

## D•E•S•C•A•R PROJECT CONSTRUCT

As the D•E•S•C•A•R Project continued to define itself, it became important to communicate that definition to others. A construct with seven key points was developed to summarize the perspective of the D•E•S•C•A•R leadership. The seven points are:

1. Children have the right to be able to live out their development potential.
2. Many children do not and are not able to reach their full potential because of insufficient support from parents/family, extended family network, the church, the school, and the community.
3. Lutheran congregations have the potential to have a profound impact on the development of young children (from the congregation and the community) and on the nurturing of faith of young children).
4. Many congregations and members do not (a) know what, (b) know how, or (c) have the desire to address the needs of young children. Nor do many members in congregations understand why this is so critical an issue today.
5. Some congregations do understand and are committed to supporting young children and their families and have developed exemplary approaches, programs and models.
6. "Dedicated Early Support for Children At Risk" (D•E•S•C•A•R) is focused on congregations and their members to help empower them to respond to the unique needs of children and their caretakers within the congregation and the community/

neighborhood. It is also committed to discover and describe congregations across North America who are carrying out a ministry to children and their families, and to find ways to share this information with others.

7. The ultimate outcome of this project will be more children who are growing in physical, mental, social, and spiritual ways, and fewer children who are losing the capacity to grow to their God-given potential.

## THE D•E•S•C•A•R "ORGANIZATION"

As the project developed, there arose a need to form a Steering Committee to guide the work of the various meetings, and to make decisions between gatherings. This committee was also charged with developing priorities for the work, and with identifying the key strategies which would accomplish that work.

The Steering Committee was comprised of representatives from both the ELCA and LCMS and included individuals from national office staffs, academicians, theologians, and other key leaders in early childhood and related fields. In addition to Stan Graven and Luther Lindberg, the Steering Committee included Marilyn Beccue, Peter Becker, Dale Griffin, Mary Hughes, Connie Leean, Shirley Morgenthaler, Phillip Kuehnert, and Marilyn Stallheim.

Various groups were formed to accomplish the work of the project. Most recently, a Task Force has been constituted to oversee the development of the project in years four and five.

## D•E•S•C•A•R NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE

One of the needs identified at the national gathering was the need for central information gathering and dissemination. The Steering Committee opted to use its remaining funding to establish a D•E•S•C•A•R National Clearinghouse and selected Concordia University, River Forest, Illinois as the location for this clearinghouse.

The work of the Clearinghouse began in August, 1994. This work has included the compilation of materials and resources on young children at risk and on spiritual development of young children. In addition, a newsletter was published and distributed to all individuals who had been identified as interested in this issue through the dialogue groups and national meeting. The second newsletter issue is currently in distribution.

The resources being gathered by the Clearinghouse and being organized into Info-Sheets, which are single-page annotated bibliographies on topics and issues related to the work of D•E•S•C•A•R, such as faith development, family support, and developmental ideals. These Info-Sheets will be available upon request to individuals and congregations by contacting the Clearinghouse.

## D•E•S•C•A•R HANDBOOK

Another project of the Steering Committee through its Editorial Board was the development of a handbook for use by local congregations as they study the is-

ssues of children at risk and plan ministries to address these issues. This handbook is directed toward helping congregations move from Type A to Type B, and from Type B to Type C.

The handbook includes descriptions of a variety of existing programs, strategies to assess community needs, and ways to identify other agencies which can join in the effort to support the needs of young children. Copies of the handbook have been mailed to selected professionals and congregations, and are available upon request from the ELCA Distribution Service at Augsburg Fortress (800-328-4648).

## CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT CENTERS

While the work of D•E•S•C•A•R has been impressive over the past three-plus years, there is much work left to be done. The D•E•S•C•A•R Project has recently received an additional two years of funding from AAL through the CPPC. This funding is specifically directed toward the development of selected Congregational Support Centers to provide information, encouragement and consultation to congregations as they work to address the needs of very young children in their congregations and communities.

Funding for Congregational Support Centers has been granted by D•E•S•C•A•R to Concordia University in River Forest, Illinois and to Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia, South Carolina. Each of these centers will work with congregations of both the ELCA and LCMS in their area. This work will in-



clude identification of child advocates in each congregation, actively making resources available through the National Clearinghouse, and making available early childhood specialists to work with congregations in assessing current needs and developing programs to meet the needs of young children at risk.

ELCA synods and LCMS districts in South Carolina, northern Illinois and eastern Iowa will be specifically targeted for services by the two Congregational Support Centers. However, other interested congregations and individuals are encouraged to call or write for information and resources.

To receive information from the D•E•S•C•A•R National Clearinghouse call 708-488-4104 or write the D•E•S•C•A•R

National Clearinghouse, Concordia University, 7400 Augusta, River Forest, Illinois, 60305. Lists of resources (Info-Sheets) are being prepared on a variety of topics related to young children and spiritual nurture. These will be available upon request.

#### THE REST OF THE STORY

The rest of the D•E•S•C•A•R Story remains yet to be written in individual congregations as they work to assess needs and develop responses to those needs. It will be written by passionate professionals who will carry the concerns of young children at risk to their colleagues and congregations and become catalysts for the work to be done.

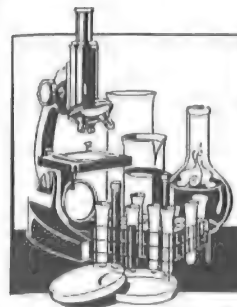
Will you help write this story? Will you start today?+

### Allowance Tips

By giving an allowance to your child, you can teach financial responsibility. Here are some suggestions for how to make an allowance effective.

1. Give enough allowance so that some of it can be saved. The U.S. national average is \$2 a week.
2. Help your child keep track of how he spends his allowance.
3. Teach long-term saving practices in order to buy a big-ticket item.
4. Encourage your child to give to your church and charities.
5. Interest your child in investing. Some companies allow kids to buy one or a few shares of stock. Phone Dow Theory Forecasts at 219-931-6480.

—adapted from *Child* (October 1994)



Ken Ebel

## Science and Its Limits

Science and scientific technology are held in high esteem by our society with good reason. Through the scientific method of testing and experimentation many basic needs of people have been met. Scripture (The Holy Bible) used to hold such a position when many questions of life seemed unanswerable. Only a God with wisdom could have created such a world. Western society for the most part believed Paul in 1 Cor. 1:20-23.

"Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified; a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God."

Science began answering questions about this world and life that we thought were reserved for God. Our sights turned from the mystery and pain of this world and the hope of life with God in heaven to the good life here on earth which science was providing. Science has discovered many unknowns and scientific technology has produced many products. The future promise and potential of scientific discoveries seems limitless. Our hope no longer centered on a life after death but a transformation in this life. Just ask any 7th or 8th grader if they think some day man will visit other planets, or visit other solar systems. They feel man's potential is limitless. All things seem to be possible.

Added to these truly marvelous technological innovations, the biological sciences have broadened this concept to include the organization of matter and the creation of life itself without a designer or without a purpose in mind (evolution). Science now seems to answer, or will be able to answer, almost any question, from the origin of life and the universe to what will happen in the future. Scripture has been replaced. However, can science fulfill this new role? Are there limitations to what science can do?

Yes, of course there are limitations.

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Our job as Lutheran educators, and those who know Scripture still has answers to important life questions, is to place into proper perspective these two 'rivals'. To many people, including some of our students, science has taken over as the sole source of finding truth and fulfilling man's needs. It is up to all Lutheran educators, even those who are not "scientifically minded," to understand and teach the limitations of science. By so doing, science will not be so "awe-filled" and Scripture will not cease to lose its place as a revealer of truth.

#### LIMITED TO THE PHYSICAL WORLD

Science has begun to answer questions which previously were unanswerable or that were credited to a miracle-working God. This has given science credibility. Here is a simplistic example but it gets my point across. "Is it true that the moon is made of cheese?" The answer is "no." Scientific endeavors have allowed us to land on the moon and see for ourselves that it is not.

But, can science answer all questions or even potentially answer all questions? No, obviously not. Our task is to identify these limitations. For example, Is it true there are angels? Science is not in a position to answer either yes or no. But society has allowed and even expected science to find an answer to such a question. Therefore the answer given by science is "No, there are no angels."

How can science come up with that answer? A "no" answer can only be ob-

tained if it is assumed that either, 1) science can answer questions beyond the physical world, or 2) there is no reality beyond the physical world. We know science is limited to answering questions only about the physical world. Therefore, a negative answer from science is based upon the assumption that there is no reality beyond the physical world. This assumption might not be correct. (We of course believe it is not correct.) The point is science cannot answer questions beyond the physical, testable world. Science is limited.

#### LIMITED BY TESTABILITY

A second limitation of science is the need for testability. The integrity of science lies in its ability to test an answer. Professor Phillip E. Johnson a lawyer teaching at University of California - Berkeley who wrote *Darwin on Trial* has a fictitious story which emphasizes this point. (1) A worker producing O-rings for the space shuttle Challenger told his boss these particular O-rings would not work. His boss had a Ph.D. in O-ring development and said they would work. The Challenger, as we all know, exploded due to an O-ring problem. In science, it should not matter who you are or what you predict because the experiment will prove your hypothesis correct or incorrect. The burden of proof lies in the experiment, the test. This is what makes science so powerful.

But in certain areas of science, especially in the area of evolution, there is limited testability. It would be like NASA

trying to save money by never sending the space shuttle up and only having a research program based on what it thought to be the best ideas. Because of expenses, these ideas would never be tested. If they are not tested, their validity cannot be determined.

#### SCIENCE CANNOT MAKE VALUE OR MORAL JUDGMENTS

Science also falls short in two very important decision making areas of society or of individuals. The first of these is in placing a value or worth on an object or action. Science cannot determine the value of a painting or a sunset. It can quantify and discuss what people think is of greater or lesser value. But science, independent of people, cannot distinguish a value difference. It is not capable of helping us determine value. We must determine value based on something other than science.

Moral judgments are also outside of science. For example, science cannot determine if war is moral or immoral, if cheating on a test is right or wrong, or if homosexuality is okay or not. We, as a society, base our value judgments and moral judgments on something other than science.

#### SOME RAMIFICATIONS

There are some major consequences of science's limitations which should directly affect our teaching. The capacity of science to determine the presence or absence of a God is the first and foremost. Science cannot tell us God does not exist. Its methods and assumptions are based upon test-

ability and repeatability which are limited to a physical three-dimensional world. If its methods are limited to three dimensions, it is presumptuous to declare any knowledge beyond those three dimensions. Because science cannot show the absence of a God, the possibility of His existence remains.

A second consequence of the limitations of science is also extremely important. Science is of no help in the search for, or the determination of, values and morals. This leaves us with two main alternatives: moral relativism or a revealed moral and value system. There are tremendous problems with a system of values dependent upon a vote of the people at a particular time and place (moral relativism). Our society in general, including many of our parents and students, seems to be taking this path today. Thus, we have such controversial societal debates as abortion. The reason many are adopting this approach is because they feel God has been replaced with science. A vacuum is created. God has been replaced with science although science is not capable of determining values, clearly a dilemma.

It is interesting that some people in public education have finally come to this understanding. Just last year, Gene Bedley, an Irvine, California public elementary school teacher, was praised in the *Orange County Register* for his part in teaching values.(2) The headlines read:

Beyond the 3 R's: Lessons in values Education: Irvine students are immersed in ethics and morals.

James Q. Wilson, a professor of management, and public policy at the University of California at Los Angeles who authored *The Moral Sense* goes back to Aristotle's "natural law" and says there is a "universal law of nature that is discoverable by human reason; it exists in all people regardless of culture, and leads us inevitably to judge actions as right or wrong." (3) Do you see? There is a crack in the foundation of science. True, people can say our reason, and therefore this 'natural law', has evolved, but the point here is, science is incapable of answering all of our problems and questions. Another point would be, our society is looking for absolutes in this area of values, a "universal law of nature." As Christians we can step into this debate and defend our values without apology.

A third consequence of the limitations of science involves the need of testability. A discussion of evolution falls in this area. Darwinism or neo-Darwinism, the gradual change over time from one species to another, is being challenged. This challenge does not only come from creationists but from evolutionists themselves. Why? Because the main tenet of Darwinism, natural selection and mutations as the mechanism of change, is not testable.

Dr. Michael J. Denton, a Senior Research Fellow in the Biochemistry Department at the University of Otago, New Zealand who wrote *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*, says that Darwinism is not validated by one single empirical discovery or

scientific advance since 1859. (4) Eight years later in a video interview by Access Research Network, he continued to question science's emphasis on Darwinism and its lack of testability: "The theory (Darwinism) itself is unsubstantiated. Mutation as an explanation for changes is not proven" (tested). Randomness of mutation or undirected mutation is not a proven explanation. It seems illogical for mutations to be the cause of complex, specific structures such as the one-way lungs of birds, etc. (5) Dr. Denton is not a creationist. He simply says that at the moment we do not have a good naturalistic explanation for the evolution of life.

Even Stephen Jay Gould, the modern guru of evolution, pronounced the effective death of the neo-Darwinian synthesis in the scientific journal *Paleobiology*, offering his own explanation. He later changed his mind. But his and Niles Eldredge's theory of punctuated equilibrium brought out in the open the lack of fossil transitional forms, the sudden appearance of species in the fossil record, and stasis—which is the continuation of fossils through the rock layers without change. (6)

The latest stir comes from Michael Ruse, a renowned philosopher of science whose testimony became the centerpiece of the decision by Federal Judge Overton who declared the "Equal Treatment Law" unconstitutional at the Little Rock "Scopes II Monkey Trial." Ruse was asked to "debunk Johnson" at a seminar which was part of the Annual Meeting of the Ameri-

can Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). Instead, he shocked his colleagues by endorsing a key point of Johnson's book, *Darwin on Trial*: Darwinian doctrines are ultimately based on "philosophical assumptions: not upon scientific evidence." (7)

For those of you in science who would like more information on the evolutionary aspects of the short-comings of science, I would recommend the two books mentioned above and also one specifically written for the teacher *Of Pandas and People: The Central Question of Biological Origins* by Percival Davis and Dean H. Kenyon. (8)

## IS THERE "TRUTH" OUTSIDE OF SCIENCE?

My last point deals with "revealed truth." Science cannot answer all of our questions. It is limited to testability and the three dimensional world. Are we then left without answers? Most people would say "No, of course not." From where do these answers come? Many religious groups profess some type of revealed (from God) knowledge. Mormons talk about the gold leaves which Joseph Smith translated. Moslems speak of the Koran as revealed information of Allah to Mohammad. We Christians speak of the Scripture (the Bible), Old and New Testaments. Lutherans accept *Sola Scripture* (Scripture alone) as the sole revealed information from God. Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, and others accept the Scripture as revealed truth from God, but also believe God con-

tinues to reveal information through church tradition or church leaders like the Pope.

Once you know and begin to use in your teaching the limitations of science, it is also important to know and be able to defend your belief in God with evidence. Because of the belief that God has revealed Himself, His wishes, and His plans and purposes in Scripture, there is a need for apologetics. You should be able to defend Scripture as the only and true revealed truth—"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have." I Peter 3:15.

Our God is a god of history. He says, "Taste and see that the Lord is good..." Ps. 34:8 He is not afraid of challenges to his sovereignty or His revealed truths in Scripture. Jesus says in John 14:6, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life..."

Let me explain one more bit of evidence showing that our God is not afraid of challenges and even invites them. In John 1:1 we read, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Many of us have heard that the Greek for "Word" in John 1:1 is *Logos*. Jesus is the *Logos*. There is another Greek term for "Word" which could have been used, *Mythos*. The meaning of *mythos* is "a descriptive, final word on the subject, an authoritative account of the facts, not to be questioned." This is why many non Christians call the stories of the Bible myths. The meaning of *logos*, among other things is "an account whose truth can be demonstrated and debated."



God invites us to question his existence, His words, and Jesus himself. He's told us that if we seek Him with all our heart He will be found (Jer. 29:13, 1 Chron. 28:9, Prov. 8:17). Let us not be afraid to proclaim Christ crucified, Christ the power of God, and Christ the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:20-23).

Dr. Martin Luther King put it this way:

Science gives man Knowledge, which is power;

Religion give man wisdom, which is control.

Science deals mainly with facts;

Religion deals mainly with values.

The two are not rivals

If the limitations of science were also taught within our public educational institutions, it would be obvious to both teachers and students that answers to certain questions could not be obtained from scientific study. Therefore, if answers are not possible through scientific investigation but are still sought by the secular community, they would have to come from sources other than science. Scripture, as well as other potential sources of revealed knowledge, would be a possible source. It would then be up to each religious community to defend their answers. And, like the Bereans discovered, Scripture is defensible.†

## END NOTES

1. This story is not in his book. It was told to a group of college students a number of years ago the tape of which I could not find. His book, now in its second edition is causing quite a stir in Darwinist circles. As a lawyer debat-

ing philosophical principles, he has been hard to discredit. Phillip E. Johnson, *Darwin On Trial*, Downers Grove, IL, InterVarsity Press, 1991, ISBN 0-8308-1758-1. This is an easily understandable book—a church library book, or a school library book. An excellent video on this subject is Johnson's lecture to students and faculty at the University of California at Irvine, 1992. Purchase is available through Reasons to Believe, P.O. Box 5978, Pasadena, CA 91117.

2. Orange County Register Education Section, Sunday, November 28, 1993.

3. From an article in the Opinion Section of the Orange County Register, Monday, November 29, 1993.

4. Michael J. Denton, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*, (Bethesda, Adler & Adler, Publishers, Inc., 1985, ISBN 0-917561-05-8). Denton is a Senior Research Fellow, Biochemistry Department, University of Otago, New Zealand.

5. These quotes were taken from a video: Focus on Darwinsim-Interview with Michael J. Denton, 1993. The video is distributed by: Access Research Network, P.O. Box 38069, Colorado Springs, CO 80937. Excellent for study group on the subject of Creation/Evolution. Two other interviews, Phillip E. Johnson and Dean Kenyon, are also available on video tape. An article on Dean Kenyon can be found in *Origins Research*, 15(2) 1993. *Origins Research* is a paper published by Access Research Network. One other excellent video obtainable through Access Research Network is "Darwinism: Science or Philosophy?", a talk by Johnson given to University of California at Santa Barbara students and faculty.

6. N. Eldredge and S.J. Gould, "Punctuated Equilibria: An Alternative to Phyletic Gradualism" in *Models in Paleobiology*, ed T.J.M. Schopf, San Francisco, Freeman, Cooper and Co, 1973.

7. This came from *Apologetics News Bulletin*, Spring, 1994 of the C.S. Lewis Fellowship, 2430 Trinity Oaks Blvd., New Port Richey, Florida, 34655.

8. Percival Davis and Dean H. Kenyon, *Of Pandas and People*, Dallas, Houghton Publishing Company, 1989, ISBN 0-914513-00-12. "Word to the Teacher" by Charles B. Thaxton is a teachers supplement, ISBN 0-914513-0013.

Jon K. Anderson

## The Heritage of Lutheran Education

Luther believed that Satan was using the educational system of his day to keep control of the world. He wrote:

"He [Satan] thus pursues a wise course to maintain his kingdom and win the youth of Germany. And if he secures them, if they grow up under his influence and remain his adherents, who can gain any advantage over him? He retains an easy and peaceful mastery over the world. For any fatal wound to his cause must come through the young, who, brought up in the knowledge of God, spread abroad the truth and instruct others." (Luther on Education by F.V.N. Painter; Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis; 1889 - p. 172-3)

For many years the public schools of our country were free to include prayers and references to the Bible in their classrooms. Most of the families of the children were at least nominally Christian and there was no objection raised. Our Christian heritage, however, is not a part of our (non-sectarian) Constitution and an occasional reference to a supreme being is about as far as religion is allowed into the papers of the state.

The first schools in this country were Christian, being established when believers first arrived in America. With the advent of public schools, however, many denominations dropped their schools. Most of these denominations have now become more liberal and have lost their spiritual foundations.

The founders of the LC-MS, however, recognized that no public school could ever help the parents of their children give them the kind of education that was needed for training in righteousness. It is the educational system of the LC-MS that has kept our church strong and faithful to its heritage. Unless Satan can lead us to water down our Christian curriculum and simply give lip service to our faith and not heart service, the schools of the LC-MS will remain as a bulwark against the inroads of worldliness into our lives.†

Arthur Lyons

## Liturgy and Evangelism



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*Editor's Note: The following article is a response or commentary to the article by Rod Rogers in the Nov/Dec 1993 issue of this journal. Arthur Lyons is a layman whose denominational history gives him a unique perspective to make such a commentary.*

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Since I joined the LCMS fifteen years ago, I have noticed with interest and amusement the various discussions surrounding liturgy and evangelism. With interest because some believe strong evangelism is dependent on either an updated liturgy (or theology), while others blindly point to other denominations and ask "Why can't we be more like them?"

The discussion becomes amusing because most Lutherans have not spent significant time worshipping or interacting with evangelical Christians and therefore are absent the insight into their reasons for growth. Upon closer observation, one might discover there is probably less of a correlation between liturgy and evangelism than one would like to believe.

What are my "credentials" in this area and what experience have I had? I was an active participant in the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. until I was nineteen, then graduated from the second largest Southern Baptist university in the country. My children have for years attended a private school operated by evangelical Presbyterians (P.C.A.). While I am not in the professional ministry, the observations I offer come from twenty-seven years of witnessing and participating in the rise of evangelical Christianity. Living most of my life in the South, I have seen all too often the strength of the evangelicals and the weakness of the LCMS.

Whenever we see something that is successful, we tend to want to copy that success without careful examination. As Lutherans, we first need to discover the reasons why evangelical Christianity has experienced its success, then analyze that information to determine if there is application for the LCMS. The best source of this information would originate from the evangelical churches (primarily Baptist and P.C.A.) as opposed to charismatic (Church of God, Assembly of God, etc.). Charismatics, while growing rapidly on a percentage basis, will never become a dominant religious force because their doctrine and methodologies are too extreme for most. For the benefit of those who have not worshipped at their local mega-church, let's take a glimpse at a typical evangelical worship experience.

While there are many small evangelical churches (under 1000 members) I am referring to those in the 2000-20,000 member range. Ironically, worshipping at one of these is not an easy experience. Driving up at 11:00 on a Sunday there will be no parking available for blocks, maybe even a mile or two in the city. So you end up parking in one of their designated lots and being bused over to the church. When you arrive, it would be advisable to be well dressed if you want to fit in. Blue jeans, sweatshirts, or casual clothes are frowned on because good dress and appearance are seen as a sign of reverence to God.

Now you walk across the carpeted floor trying to find a seat on the crowded, cushioned pew. Except for the movement of children getting settled, the thousands already gathered are quiet, preparing for worship. As you read through the bulletin, you notice how structured the service is. You will need to juggle between the hymnal and Bible located in front of you (unless you brought your own Bible as many do).

As the organ begins the prelude, the beautifully robed choir walks in to its place behind the pulpit area. You look for a rock band or modern instruments, but none are to be found. The minister is robed in his doctoral gown while his assistants, some not Ph.D.'s, wear dark suits. As you turn through the hymnal, you notice it was last published in 1951. With no inserts being used, you follow the scripture reading in the Bible, noticing there are no lay readers. Then comes the sermon—long,

but powerful and dynamic. Although you disagree with some of the theology, it is clear the message has touched the congregation. Twenty-five minutes go by as they sit captivated. For many this Sunday, this is what they came to hear. God's grace will not be available through Holy Communion, since it is never offered here. Service is over this Sunday at 12:15, and you make your way back to the bus that will take you to your car.

The success of the evangelicals defies some conventional wisdom about church growth, so on the surface it may be difficult to determine what has driven their success. My experiences have lead me to list five possible reasons:

- 1) Evangelicals strongly believe everything they do is for the glory of God and are constantly trying to discern His will for their lives. Apostle Paul instructs us to pray unceasingly, and that's pretty much what they do. Although their prayers can be long, disorganized and redundant, they are in earnest. Style of prayer is usually informal, what Martin Marty would refer to as "God, I just want you to know...", which is all a part of their personal relationship with Jesus. Their quest for discernment is never ending and permeates their prayer and thought process. How many times I have heard the phrase "we just want to do your will"! Does this mean Baptists are holier than Lutherans or that works righteousness is better than grace through faith? Certainly not, but know that they are working harder for the king-

dom—for whatever their motivations—than we are, and it shows.

2) Emphasis on evangelism is enormous and it is accomplished outside of Sunday worship. Worship is the end result of the weekly evangelistic effort. In fact, "altar call"—the invitation to come forward and publicly confess faith in Jesus—is rarely done at large churches during 11:00 service. It is, however, performed quite frequently in smaller groups and alternative worship settings throughout the week. Meantime, youth and adult activities are constantly used as an evangelistic forum where members are encouraged to bring family and friends. This means visitors have already interacted socially and spiritually by the time they attend worship.

It would be naive and misleading for Lutherans to think worship is the primary place to emphasize evangelism. The visitor simply is not afforded the time and place to interact with members. The social and spiritual awkwardness of the visitor can best be overcome outside the worship service. There is enough time during the week for evangelizing. There must be time set aside purely for worship.

3) They are uncompromising in their beliefs. In a society that has become decidedly liberal in its social institutions, including mainline Protestantism, the evangelicals stand out conspicuously. They do not ordain women or have women elders. They condemn homosexuality, much less ordain it. On all social issues of the day they remain staunchly conserva-

tive. It is the evangelicals who speak out boldly, holding accountable those that are anti-biblical. They are willing to bear the ridicule of liberals in order to support and defend those beliefs they know to be true. No other Protestant group has been as steadfast, courageous and vocal in their dealings with secular America and popular culture. This is what people want and need—a denomination that stands fast on issues and doctrine when all else in society stands for nothing. There must be a constant in people's lives, a standard or benchmark to strive for. The church must teach and uphold those standards as God has set forth.

This strong set of convictions, opinions, and interpretation can also have a negative impact. There has been dissension and secession within the evangelicals over a variety of issues. Still, the churches continue to grow.

LCMS for the most part has remained relatively steadfast in its theology, doctrine and social stances over the years. Unfortunately, few within the congregations (fewer outside the church) know what the LCMS positions are. There is absolutely no doubt that if more people knew what we stood for we would grow dramatically. LCMS has what the majority of Americans seek—a stable church with conservative ideology. Conservative churches with strong orthodoxy are growing dramatically faster and larger than "mainline" churches with "liberalodoxy". It's time for the LCMS to stand up and be counted.

4) Great emphasis is placed on effective sermons. While ministers have various preaching styles and views that appeal to different tastes and audiences, evangelicals certainly can preach. Rightly or wrongly, many, many people attend to hear their minister preach. It excites, stimulates and captivates them toward the Gospel message. Their dynamic sermons instruct and motivate.

The LCMS formula of preaching law and gospel, using the lectionary as text, is a necessary one, but how does it impact my life today? How should I view important issues of the day? How should I live with others and what type of action should I be taking in my life?

Sadly I am not hearing the answers to those questions being preached in LCMS churches. Furthermore, even if the content is made relevant, the delivery is not powerful. At the risk of providing a blanket critique, LCMS pastors could deliver, in a more enthusiastic manner, content that instructs both theologically and pragmatically. Doctrine can be made relevant in an interesting way. There is no other part of worship that needs to change or improve except today's Lutheran sermon. We know that God, however, does not bless everyone with the gift of great preaching and thankfully, many ministers are blessed with other gifts equally as important and powerful to their congregations. Yet, improvement of preaching skills both in form and substance is a critical necessity.

5) All activities have a religious emphasis. Evangelicals provide a wide

variety of social and spiritual outlets with the cornerstones being Bible studies, Sunday school and special conferences. Many may say Lutherans do the same thing—after all, we're not a bunch of pagans. However, I ask you, when was the last time your church held a three day workshop on apologetics and 1000 people attended? The fun and games are usually visible to the casual observer, but their churches also function almost as mini-seminaries. Wide ranging classes are taught on the Christian faith, and while the parishioner may be no seminary student, greater numbers are learning in more detail the tenets of the Christians faith.

What conclusions can be made from these observations?

First, liturgy and evangelism are, for the most part, exclusive of each other. True, worship can be evangelistic while evangelism can occur in liturgy. However, it should not be designed that way, for it is neither an effective way to worship or an efficient way to evangelize.

Second, no self respecting evangelical would remotely consider tampering with his worship style or belief system. It simply would not be considered. Why should the LCMS be any different? We must not compromise, experiment with or change liturgy and theology. We are who we are, for sound reasons, and let's be proud of it. That doesn't mean we can't improve what we are, but why compromise the liturgy to accommodate what we think others might want? The Baptists aren't about to change for us because they

believe that what they are doing is right. Lutherans should feel the same way.

Third, if there is to be any change in worship, it is to include an enthusiastically delivered sermon consisting of "practical theology". For twenty minutes each week, pastors have the unique opportunity to reach the largest number of people at a single setting. We have not taken full advantage of this opportunity.

Finally, if one cares to view religion as a product as Rod Rogers did in his article in *Lutheran Educator*, "Of Likes, Dislikes, and Liturgies" (Nov./Dec. 1993), then I firmly conclude LCMS has a "prod-

uct" that most Americans want. We don't need to change the product, we need to advertise and market it more effectively. Evangelicals are growing more rapidly than LCMS because they are focused, motivated, well trained and harder working. If this were not so, then LCMS would have the 15 million members the Southern Baptists have. That, unfortunately, is the painful truth, but it does not have to remain that way. Steadfast in our Lutheran traditions and made bold by the Holy Spirit, we can more effectively and powerfully communicate the Gospel to others.✚

### *North of the Border*

The fact that more than 90 per cent of Canadian dropouts leave before completing their 10th year of school helps to maintain the appalling incidence of illiteracy and innumeracy in Canada. Well-grounded research has shown that a minimum of 24 per cent of Canadians aged 18 and over are functionally illiterate and/or unable to do simple arithmetic. This rate is approximately the same as the estimated average in the world, which take in billions of peasants in underdeveloped countries. If anything, illiteracy is a worse problem for Canadians who suffers from it than those in a less developed milieu.

It might shock a responsible parent elsewhere to learn that one of the most common reasons for quitting school in Canada is simple boredom. In fact, boredom was the leading reason among the females surveyed in the StatsCan study, at 22 per cent. Boredom was also cited by 18 per cent of the males and was apparently a factor in their number-one reason: 28 per cent of the males said they would rather do "real" work than school work. Was that because they found school work too difficult? Not necessarily: more than half had passing grades in their last year of school.

—*Royal Bank Letter* (January/February 1995)

### *Administrative*

### *Talk*

Perry Bresemann

## *Privilege and Responsibility*

The four-year-olds were sitting on the carpet. Their eyes were focused on the teacher as she told them that Jesus loved them so much that He gave up His life for them. She smiled as she talked about her friend Jesus and the students smiled as they sang "Jesus Loves Me."

The eighth grade students were focused on the history lessons at hand. The facts were unfolding as they looked at the formation of our country and the events that painted our past. The teacher helped the students see how God has blessed our country and how blessed we are to live in a land of religious freedom—never to be taken for granted and always to be enjoyed.

The athletes knelt for a moment of prayer as the competition was about to begin. Prayers for the safety of all players were offered and the teams took their positions and the contest began.

In the quiet moments of a parent conference the teacher and the parents joined in prayer as they asked for God's guidance and blessing as they worked together to provide Christian training for the child that they were blessed to share.

The principal greeted a new family to the community. They talked about the transition to a new community and the potential of attending Faith Lutheran School. The principal discussed the parent's church membership and was blessed with an opportunity to witness a great love for Jesus and the assurance of eternal life that all believers have.

The DCE sat quietly in the youth center as a group of teens talked about the challenges of the day and the pressures of living the Christian life in the social world of high school. The DCE shared the strength that belongs to each of us as we rely on Jesus and His strength.

The day to day ministry of the Lutheran educator is filled with countless opportunities for us to carry our privilege and to



share the Good News in the school setting. It is exciting to be a part of God's classrooms and conference rooms. It is a privilege.

Serving as a called and commissioned minister of religion is a great privilege. It is one that is filled not only with great privilege but also great responsibility. For many, we are the "bible" that is read daily. For many, our actions underscore the reality of God's love in our lives.

Those we serve need to find us reading God's Word. They need to see us dealing with one another with love and respect. They need to hear us repent and ask for forgiveness when we err, and they need to observe us making worship a priority.

As administrators we have many tasks before us. Supporting our teachers as they continue to grow in understanding the privilege and responsibility of the Teaching Ministry must be a priority if Lutheran Schools are to remain Lutheran Schools.†

### *What Does It Take?*

Technology has been promising to revolutionize education for years, but none of those promises have been kept. Thomas Edison's film projector was introduced in 1896 with the promise that it would make school so attractive that "a big army with swords and guns couldn't keep boys and girls out of it." That didn't happen.

Then came "radio schools of the air" in the 1930's. Enthusiasts predicted this new technology would soon "be as common in the classroom as the blackboard." Wrong again.

In the 1950's it was television's turn to promise a revolution in the way children learn. But that promise was also broken.

New technology—and new promises—kept coming throughout the 1960's: language labs, teaching machines, 8mm filmstrips, large-screen multimedia presentations, and finally the earliest computers. All those promises notwithstanding, not much has changed. Schools still look pretty much the same.

Remember Vice President Gore's clarion call: "We now have a new generation of educational hardware and software that can really make a revolutionary difference in the classroom, and it's time to use it."

The new technology the Vice President was talking about is built around the modern, high-speed computer, and includes modems, CD-ROM's and the Internet, the worldwide computer network. This technology is fundamentally different from yesterday's slide projector or filmstrip. Those were one-dimensional tools, the schoolhouse equivalent of a hammer.

Think of it this way: A hammer can increase your ability to drive in nails, but that's it. It's just a tool for your hand. It cannot tell you where to drive in the nails, or which size nails to use, or whether they're going in straight. A hammer can't design a house, or work out a table of mortgage payments you'll have to make to pay for the house. The computer, a tool for your mind, can do all these things, and more.

Of course the computer can be used as a simple tool: to practice math skills, or for word processing. But students using computers can also design cities, compose their own music, or browse through a library in Japan or London. Students not only learn more, but, using the computer, they can also create their own knowledge. Quite naturally they take ownership of what they create, and become more interested, more motivated learners.—*Education Week* (March 29, 1995)

*Rich Bimler*

## *Read Any Good T-Shirts Lately?*

It used to be billboards, then refrigerator magnets, and now, to understand the various "theologies" of contemporary life, we need only to read the T-shirts that pass us by in the malls, in our schools, and even in our homes. Let's look at a few of these walking pieces of theology. Here's a few that have passed my way recently:

"I may not be rich and famous, but my grandchildren are priceless."

"Life isn't over until the fat man eats your cookies!"

"I'm not aging, I'm marinating."

"Hug a fire fighter—feel warm all over."

"Life is hard—then you die."

"Young at heart—slightly older in other places."

"If you don't like my attitude, call 1/800/Who-Cares."

"Places to go, people to annoy."

"I'm busy, you're boring—have a nice day!"

"Make the ball lie in green pastures, not in still waters (Arnie 3, Par 72)."

"24 hours in a day—24 beers in a case—coincidence?" And finally,

"How many Lutherans does it take to change a light bulb? Change? Why change?"

What does all this mean? (Not a bad slogan for a Lutheran T-shirt, by the way!) It does mean that we can continue to celebrate life and enjoy the gifts of humor. But as I see some other T-shirts with crass and vulgar statements, it also means that we are living in a society that has learned to wear its feelings on its chest for all to see.

It also reminds me that we as God's people have been clothed with the gift of the Spirit such as love, joy, peace, patience and so many others. And that people "read" our faith, not only in what is said on our T-shirts, but also on how we relate to people around us each day. I'm reminded of the Sunday school song which goes, "Matthew, Mark,

## *Multiplying*

## *Ministries*

Luke and John, they are Gospels it is true; but the Gospel most folks read, is the Gospel according to you!"

So enjoy the humorous T-shirts. And try to ignore the obscene ones. And let's continue to celebrate that fact that the people around us not only read what's written on our T-shirts, but more importantly read the message we share with them by loving and listening and learning with them, all in the name of the living Lord!

And whether we have a T-shirt that says it or not, perhaps our lives need to continue to say to those around us, "I am loved by God—and I'm glad!"

P.S. I just saw another T-shirt in front of Fannie May which reads, "Hand over the chocolate—and no one will get hurt!"✚

### *The Pit*

A man fell into a pit and couldn't get himself out.

A **SUBJECTIVE** person came along and said:

"I feel for you down there."

An **OBJECTIVE** person came along and said:

"It's logical that someone would fall down there."

A **PHARISEE** said:

"Only bad people fall into a pit."

A **MATHEMATICIAN** calculated how he fell into the pit.

A **NEWS REPORTER** wanted the exclusive story on his pit.

A **FUNDAMENTALIST** said:

"You deserve your pit."

A **TAXATION AGENT** asked if he was paying taxes on the pit.

A **SELF-PITYING** person said:

"You haven't seen anything until you've seen MY PIT!"

A **CHARISMATIC** said:

"Just confess that you're not in a pit."

An **OPTIMIST** said:

"Things could get worse."

A **PESSIMIST** said:

"Things will get worse."

**JESUS**, seeing the man, took him by the hand and **LIFTED HIM OUT** of the pit.

—From Bethlehem Coopers Plains Lutheran Church, Sunday Bulletin (Australia).

Shirley K. Morgenthaler

## *Communicating Your Mission and Philosophy*

### *Teaching the Young*

Just what is it you do? Why do you do it? In a sense, we have been considering aspects of those questions in each of these columns throughout this volume. But the challenge of answering these questions when they are asked or implied is quite different from considering their implications for classroom practice.

Helping others understand what you do and why is a challenge of each professional teacher. It is a more acute challenge, however, for teachers of young children. Both parents and other teachers do not understand the interesting and unusual practices in which teachers of young children engage.

Just why do you need so many "props" to teach? How do you know what each child is doing when children are allowed to do different activities simultaneously? Why don't you include more "facts" in your teaching?

The answers to the above questions depend in part on the perspective of the questioner. What does the individual really want to know? What is the underlying question?

Parents who ask these and similar questions are trying to make sure that the program you offer for their child is of a high quality and educationally sound. Parents are asking to be reassured that you "know what you are doing" and are a respected and articulate professional educator, not simply someone who "likes little kids."

Teachers of older children who ask such questions are trying to determine just what kind of learning takes place in the early years. They are often mystified by the amount of activity going on in an early childhood classroom, and need help in defining the purpose and focus of that activity.

Teachers of primary children asking these and related questions may just be becoming aware of the issues in play-based, developmentally appropriate teaching and learning. They may practice, and need the theory articulated for them.

In each case, several types of answers are possible and appropriate.

Children learn best through trial and error. Experimentation is an important part of learning for young children. That experimentation is best accomplished through activities chosen by the child from an array of choices in various centers in the classroom. By giving children choices, they are learning that

they can make decisions and that decisions have results and consequences.

they can have an impact on the activities of others as they interact, converse and play with other children.

they can focus on an activity for as long as it interests them. In the process, they are developing interests and specialties that may last into adulthood.

they can concentrate on an activity even when other things are going on around them. In the process, they are increasing their attention span, a key ingredient of all learning.

- Young children need to have real objects and experiences in order to learn. Those experiences allow the child to sort out what they know and want to know for themselves. Paper and pencil activities do not "teach" young children. They may tell you what the child already knows, but repeated practice of numbers and letters teaches nothing.

The best motivator for learning is the child's own interest. Many children specialize early, and should be encouraged to do so.

Many a budding mechanical engineer was taking things apart and putting them together at age 4 or 5. Many a budding writer enjoyed "writing" (scribbling) or making up stories at age 3.

Children will learn letters and numbers when they need to use them for their classroom activities. Not all children will be interested at the same time, but all children will be interested if the teacher values their scribbles and stories. Children learn from watching the teacher write lists and stories more powerfully than from "this is an A" activities.

- Children need to attempt to develop their own categories for how things fit together before adults tell them how to categorize items. The most intelligible concepts are formed by children trying to make sense of the mountain of experiences which they are having.

No one can form a concept for another person. The best we can do is to share the way we — and others — have organized concepts. The concept of zoo animals will not make sense to a child until he or she needs to differentiate that type of animal from pets or farm animals. To give the category before the experience is a waste of time.

Children learn more from figuring things out for themselves than from having an adult tell them about it.

- Children need to love learning. Their own internal motivation will provide the drive to learn more, to ask questions, to discover.

Children learn best from hands-on activities, activities that allow them to see, touch, taste, manipulate, test.

Children are motivated to increase their attention to difficult tasks if the tasks are activities they have chosen for themselves rather than activities a teacher has asked them to do.

- Children need to experience God through their interactions with the important adults in their lives.

Children need to feel the love of Jesus through their teachers and through the ways in which their teachers act and react throughout the day.

Children need to hear the love of Jesus from their teachers in the words they use to guide and direct the activities of children.

Children define "Jesus" through their interactions with the people who tell them about Jesus. Is the "Jesus in skin" that children see through you the Jesus you know and want them to know?

As you answer the spoken and unspoken questions which colleagues and parents ask, you will communicate your mission and philosophy to them. What is it you are telling them around the words? Are you communicating a confidence in your knowledge? Are you proclaiming a passion for your work? Are you conveying a commitment to your ministry?

Do the adults around you sense your dedication to your proclamation of the Gospel through your teaching? Do they see the Jesus in skin you strive to share with the children?†

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## *The Neighborhood Parish*

I contend that, while we take parishes as much for granted as the air we breathe, they are in fact absolutely unique: There is nothing quite like them anywhere in the world.

Moreover, I also assert that the parochial school within the neighborhood parish is, in fact, one of the most powerful community-building institutions which human ingenuity has ever devised.

—The Reverend Andrew Greeley

Carl Schalk

## Have You Hugged Your Hymnal Today?

First  
Person  
Singular

Twenty years ago a hymn-use survey of Lutherans (ALC, LCA, LCMS) in America revealed that only three classic Lutheran chorales made it among the twenty-five most frequently sung hymns from the two Lutheran hymnals then in use, the *Service Book and Hymnal* and *The Lutheran Hymnal*.<sup>\*</sup> Probably not much has changed since then.

The Lutheran church is a singing church, we say. But just what is it we are singing? And what are we teaching our children to sing? Lutherans should and do sing hymns of faith from many ages of the church's history. But do we have a special responsibility to sing and preserve the songs of faith which grew out of the tradition of which we claim to be a part?

What is the "Lutheran tradition" of song? Is it simply a way of thinking about congregational song? Or does it include the continued use of a particular body of material born in the crucible of the Reformation? The first 150 years gave birth to a body of hymnody of unusual strength and beauty — the Lutheran chorale. These songs combine words which proclaim the Gospel clearly and distinctly with congregational melodies which are exciting and vital musical expressions of the faith. They have nourished the faithful for generations.

Dorothy Bass has it right. In an interesting and instructive essay, "Congregations and the Bearing of Tradition" in *American Congregations*, Vol. 2, edited by James L. Wind and James W. Lewis (University of Chicago Press, 1994), Bass reminds us that traditions, to be successfully transmitted, must be *socially embodied through specific practices*. That suggests that to continue to nurture the Lutheran tradition of song, those songs unique to our tradition cannot simply be acclaimed in theory and neglected in practice. They must continue to be taught and learned and used in public worship as the treasures they surely are. In this way they continue to be a living tradition.

People who have been touched by such living tradition will naturally seek to continue their nurture—and the nurture of their children—by teaching and engaging in practices that help that tradition thrive and grow.

How are we nurturing our children in the Lutheran tradition of song? Or are these songs simply museum pieces, of interest only to antiquarians?

I see bumper stickers that say "Lutheran Schools Care A Lot." Do they care enough to nurture Lutheran traditions of congregational song? Perhaps we need a matching bumper sticker that says "Sing a Chorale Today."

Today and every day!

\*A Mighty Fortress, Praise to the Lord the Almighty, and Now Thank We All Our God.†

### Lutheran Historical Conference Essays Published

(St. Louis)—The Lutheran Historical Conference (LHC) has announced the publication of volume 15 of its series of *Essays and Reports*. Titled "Missionary to America: The History of Lutheran Outreach to Americans," the volume contains the papers presented at the organizations 16th biennial meeting in Chicago, Illinois, 12-14 November 1992. It continues a series of publications begun in 1964. The Reverend Marvin A. Huggins, assistant director for archives and library at Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis, edited the volume.

The papers in the volume focus extensively on "home missions" throughout the history of American Lutheranism, covering a wide variety of effort by America's Lutherans to bring the Gospel to their neighbors, often their fellow immigrants from various European countries of origin. The collection, forming the largest volume thus far published in the *Essays and Reports* series, touches on many aspects of the Lutheran story from the colonial period to the twentieth century.



## University With A Cause

The celebration of Concordia's centennial in 1964 was marked by the publication of *College With A Cause*. The volume, authored by Alfred J. Freitag, captured significant events in Concordia's history. Over three decades have passed since the centennial. History moves on. The world has changed dramatically.

Concordia has changed, too:

- The name is different.
- Academic programs have required alteration.
- Students, faculty, staff, and Regents have moved on only to be replaced by new names and faces.
- Lutheran Education, as a publication, has experienced revision.
- Presidents have come and gone.

What is important, however, is not so much what has changed or is gone, but what remains. It is the clear vision and understanding of the fundamental and compelling cause of Concordia that remains. This is the cause of a university that affirms its integrity and quality, as it carries out its academic mission, unashamed and bold about its Christian and Lutheran heritage. It is not deterred from the priority of educating those who will be educators and leaders in the church. There is also an appropriate commitment to shaping the minds and lives of those who serve the Lord in other necessary and worthy callings.

This is, and remains, a university with a cause. It has been a distinct privilege to have been a part of its distinguished history. A history that reflects the direction, goodness and favor of God. A history that is moved forward by competent, dedicated men and women of good will, who have a heart for the Lord and a passion for Concordia.

John Masfield's view, with slight alterations, captures my sentiments and thoughts about this unique and stellar place.

There are few earthly things more splendid than a University.

In these days of broken frontiers and collapsing values,

when the dams are down and the floods are making misery,

when every future looks somewhat grim and every ancient foothold has become something of a quagmire,

wherever a University stands, it stands and shines;

wherever it exists, the free minds of men and women, urged on to full and fair inquiry,

may still bring wisdom, dignity, and God into human affairs.

University, with an exciting, challenging and worthy cause—fare thee well!+

## A

## Final

## Word

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1994-1995

## A

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